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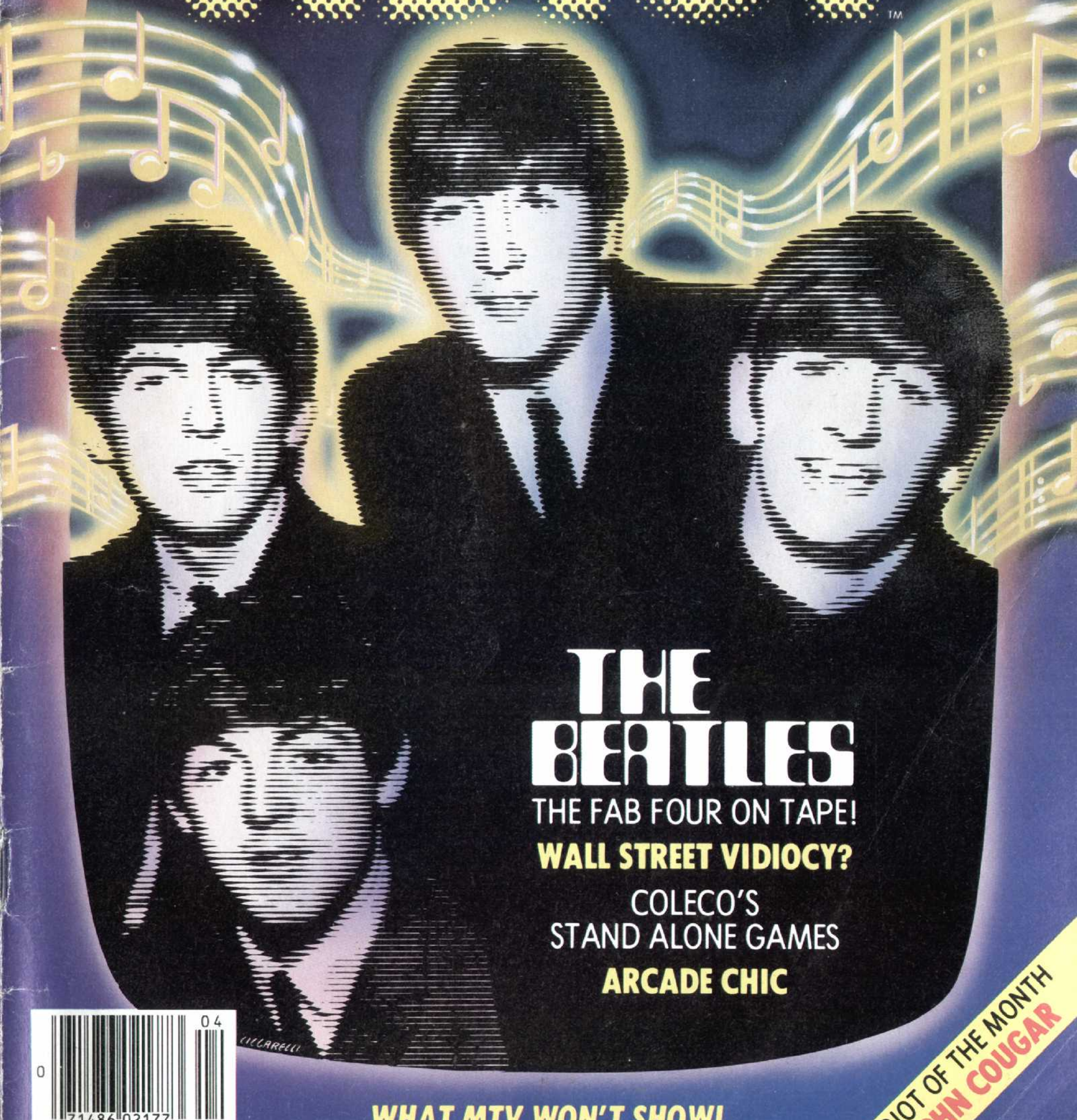
THE MAGAZINE OF VIDEO LUNACY!

VIDIOT™



THE BEATLES

THE FAB FOUR ON TAPE!

WALL STREET VIDIOCY?

COLECO'S
STAND ALONE GAMES

ARCADE CHIC

VIDIOT OF THE MONTH
JOHN COUGAR

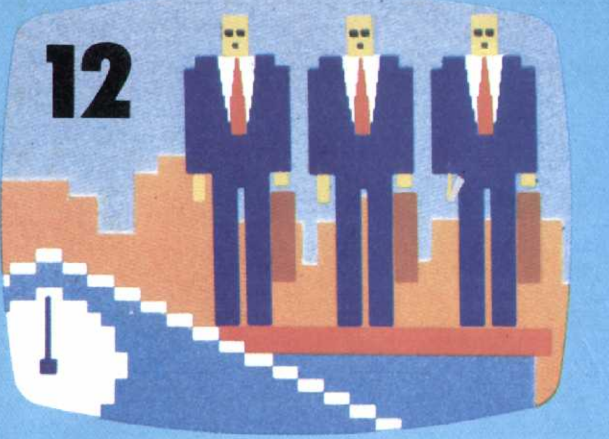
WHAT MTV WON'T SHOW!

BATTLEZONE
AIR FORCE
USAF
USAF
ONE

PLUG IN

You may not believe it, but turn AIR FORCE ONE around and you're face to face with CHRIS DIFFORD, formerly of the British group Squeeze and a Battlezone fan from way back. "At least since a *minute* ago," he'd probably add if we asked him—so we *didn't!*

photo by Ebet Roberts



VOL. 1 NO. 3

VIDIOT™

APRIL/MAY 1983

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Upfront

VIDIOTS,

If it seems slightly misleading to have the Beatles on the cover of what you perceive as a videogame magazine...well, that's the point. VIDIOT *isn't* just a videogame magazine. There are too many of those.

It's an interesting situation here, putting out VIDIOT. As you may already know, we're the same people who bring you CREEM, "America's Only Rock 'N' Roll Magazine" and a 13-year institution to many of us at this point. No doubt some of you picked this issue of VIDIOT up because you saw the CREEM trademark on the cover—not to mention the Beatles. Good.

Whether "The Magazine Of Video Lunacy" will end up as meaningful a cover blurb as "America's Only Rock 'N' Roll Magazine" is to CREEM remains to be seen, of course, and I for one can't blame you if you're wondering what the Beatles have to do with "video lunacy" in the first place. But we here at VIDIOT think it all fits together. How? Well, we're working on it, believe us. With each new edition, this mag will take shape and hopefully fit into its own little niche in the same manner CREEM did long ago.

If you picked up our last issue, you read our editor's note in the *Letters* column, in which we described the video revolution as we saw it and where VIDIOT's perspective lies. So I won't repeat that. What I *will* say, though, is that in looking at other major video mags, I noticed without exception two major flaws. Most home video mags fight a continual battle in their attempt to please both readers *and* advertisers simultaneously. That they're generally stodgy and too often new product checklists hasn't escaped us either—do you really *want* VIDIOT to publish pictures of plastic racks you can store vid cassettes or game carts in? VIDIOT says *throw 'em on the floor!* Our own new products column tells you the *trends*—what's out, what's coming out and what you're going to care about—and that's it.

The second major flaw lies in most videogame mags, and you've probably already noticed it. If *they* aren't too stodgy—and don't think they aren't—they're condescending to the point of embarrassment. VIDIOT *doesn't* think its readership consists of moronic schoolkids who laugh at Space Potty jokes, and if we *ever* underestimate anybody's intelligence out there, please let us know.

Anyone who likes the Beatles—and if you don't, you've probably never *heard* 'em—should enjoy Bill Holdship's guide to *The Compleat Beatles* and other Beatle videos in this issue. Anybody curious about those little table-top vidgames, running 60 bucks or more, should enjoy Rick Johnson's thumbs-up report herein. Wonder what happened on Wall Street last December? Greg Springer will tell you. Watch MTV? Read *Rockvidiocy*.

We're betting you like this issue of VIDIOT, and that you'll like the next one even better. When we told you last time to *plug in*, we weren't kidding. And we still aren't.

Dave DiMartino

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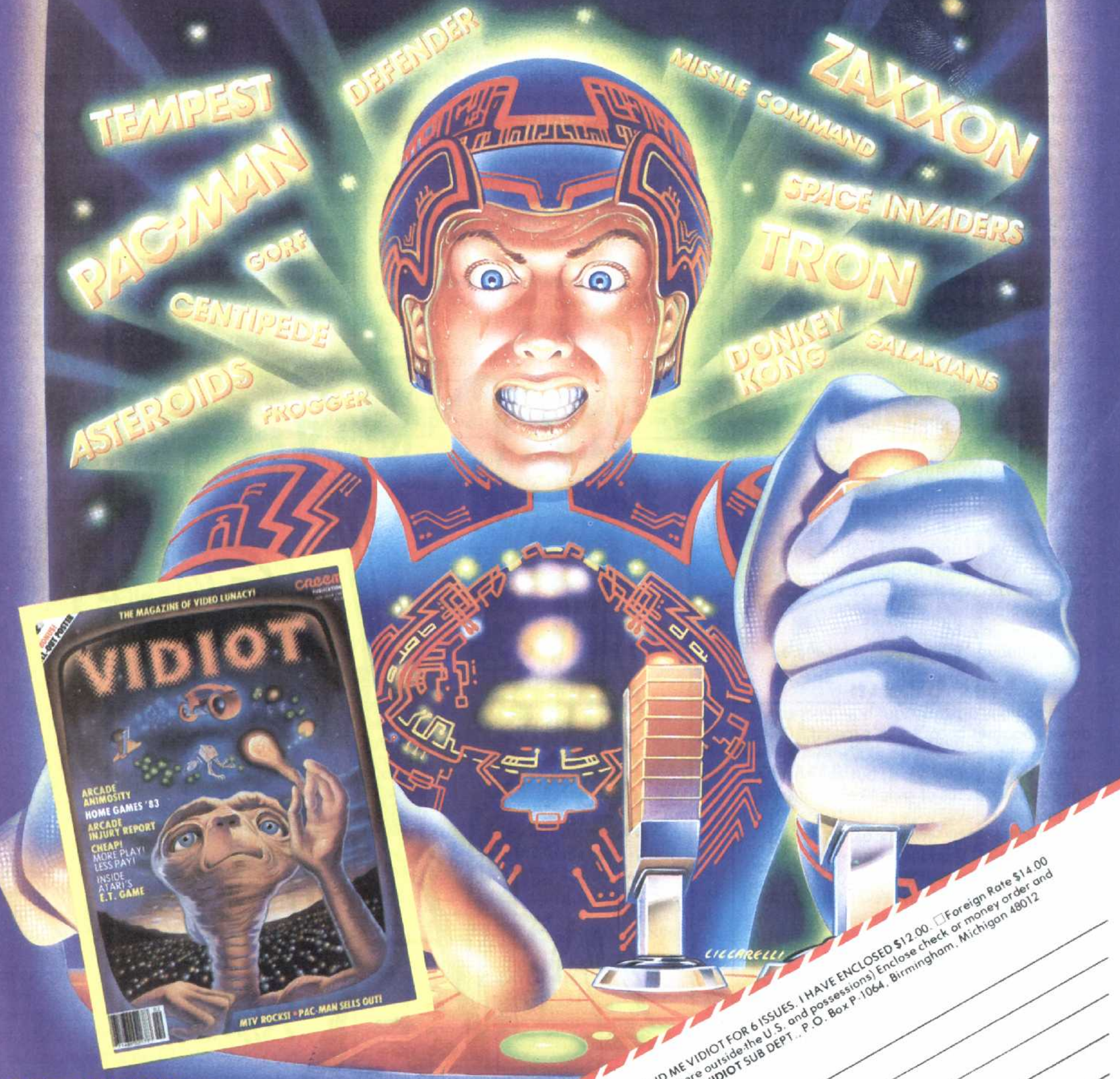
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Letters from VIDIOTS

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MORE VEEJAYS!

You wanted letters? Well, you have one now.

I don't normally purchase Video-related magazines, my tastes being aimed toward more literary mags, but I was perusing one that my younger brother bought, and came upon your article on MTV. Being addicted to the only 24 hour rock 'n' roll channel, of course I had to read the thing.

For the most part, I agreed with DiMartino's opinions on the videos shown on MTV. I, too, feel that the live videos are relatively boring, and that some bands should be heard and not seen. But you left out a very important part of MTV. What's that? The V.J.s!

If you're going to write anything about MTV, you should write about the channel's personalities. Of course, not all of them are as nice to look at as Alan Hunter, but they deserve to be heard too!

Carla Lottis
Adrian, MI

"WRITERS"?

I DON'T BELIEVE IT! A publication associated with CREEM that can actually *improve!* Really, guys—number one was Suck City. Why the hell ya letting East Coast slime do so much anyway? What do they know? Gay bars, that's what they know.

I did notice one unfortunate trend, however. Moronic writers—*fo' sho'!* Johnson and DiMartino are the worst of the worst of the CREEM-style "writers." They do not belong in VIDIOT! They belong at the aforementioned eastern bars. As for the others, John "Smoker's" Hack and Steve Kenyon probably play videogames with diving bells on. The only one I could understand was Kevin Christopher. Almost forgot—Louis Sleagle? Who you think you're kidding?

Faron Nuff
Garden City, MI

Louis is unavailable for comment.—Ed.

FUN TO CHEAT!

I liked your article about how to cheat on videogames because let's face it, it's more fun to cheat than to play.

You mag's pretty good, but you should have more pictures of girls like the one on the last page.

Other than that, you should write more about MTV and lots of the new home games. A lot of people don't know which games are which. You should also have a lot more color, too.

Jay Sedrish
Los Angeles, CA

FIRE IT UP!

I read in your magazine that your reviewer doesn't care for MTV, well, I haven't seen anything so far to beat it, so I wonder just what you're getting at. There isn't just heavy metal on MTV, like you put down .38 Special, but there's new wave and even country—whattaya want, anyway? Why don't you do something on behind the scenes at MTV or how they choose their videos, and what the veejays are like—particularly J.J. Jackson and Martha Quinn? We've had MTV for quite a while here, and the rest of the country is just now catching up—you'd better do better coverage of them or else! Better that than the zillionth article on Donkey Kong and how to play it—whoopee, my little brother should be your AA correspondent if that's what you want. Is Rick Johnson the same guy who is always "Rock Critic Of The Year" in CREEM? What'd you do fire him? hahahahahahaha.

Laura O'Neill
Ann Arbor, MI

This Rick Johnson is a "deep guy."—Ed.

FROG "HER"?

You know in "Why I Hate Arcades" where John Richardson says to jump on the lady frogs? He doesn't mean what I think he means, does he?

Also, Ben Pupko's House of Bedspreads would never advertise with you after making fun of him.

Whitey Louiston
Troy, MI

We're aware of this.—Ed.

WATCH IT!

My son brought home a copy of your magazine from his favorite arcade. I happened to page through some of it and I can only say, it's disgusting. Especially the man grabbing the lady's rear end in the "Arcade Injuries" article. You probably think your nasty humor goes right over the heads of your younger readers. Not so. When I heard my son and his friend laughing about "fruit scented erasers" and big twerps, I was appalled. You probably won't print this

AAARRRGH!
..SWALLOWED BY THE RODENT-HUMANOIDS AGAIN!
GENE SPLICER
R. CHRISTENSEN

but I hope you at least read it and reconsider the direction of your magazine.

Mrs. H. Johnson
Orlando, FL

Sure. Now what?—Ed.

MESSAGE FROM SMURFETTE

Regarding J. Kordosh's story on "offing the tube," everyone knows it's hip to blast out a TV screen. If I were a rich person, I'd do it all the time, especially during reruns of *The Brady Bunch*. I only wish that Kordosh wouldn't have quoted from Albert Goldman's book on Elvis, giving it more publicity than it deserves. Everyone knows that Goldman is a slime.

Jean Bath
Memphis, TN

MORE ROCK VIDEO

I thought your second issue of VIDIOT—the one with E.T. on the cover—was far superior to the first issue. Especially enjoyed the colorful art and Dave DiMartino's article on rock videos. My only complaint: if your magazine is supposed to be about home video, why not include reviews of the latest in video cassettes and video discs? I personally think you devote too much space to video games, and would like to see more articles similar to the one on rock vidiocy.

Ben Marceneau
Pittsburgh, PA

HIGH SCORES

One of the things that I *don't* like about lots of the video mags now are that they make too much of a big deal about arcade players. I have one friend who's *really* good on Robotron and played for hours once—then I saw a mag saying that some kid held the record, but my friend's score was higher. Just because *some* players don't feel like making such a big deal out of how good they are doesn't mean they aren't just as good as the people who do.

Bud Gangemi
New York, NY

"X" AND VIOLENCE

Having bought the second edition of VIDIOT, I feel inclined to write and complain about the lack of coverage on cable TV, and on adult films.

With all of the new cable stations that are becoming available in the US, I am one of the many curious, wondering which systems to subscribe to. I also would like to know more about individual cable channels, and what they have to offer.

And, which adult films are worth renting? Are there any worth purchasing? Perhaps a monthly review section on films for 18 and over could be helpful.

I will continue to buy your magazine, as it is one of the more upbeat video magazines offered. I only feel that it could be aimed at a more adult audience. There's more to the new technology than video games.

Peter Caldwell
Oregon, OH

WHAT IS MTV?

I think your video magazine is OK. But you shouldn't have any of this rock 'n' roll crap in it. Mick Ronson is a Vidiot? Who the hell is Mick Ronson. And I thought your crappy picture of Steve Bishop meant the whole article was about him. I've never seen that MTV you're talking about. Do you have to have your TV hooked-up special like?

Jerry Bick
Beechmont, CA

Only to watch the Don Henley videos.—Ed

CABEL, MABEL!

I have just finished reading your second edition, and I think that you have come leaps and bounds since your first issue. My question is, why the emphasis on videogames?

There is a whole slew of things to feature in your magazine besides videogames. (In fact, it seems that the games are just rehashed and rehashed.) More information on cable systems is needed. I admit I don't know much about discs, and what they have to offer, and I would really like to know more. And, is foreign cable available?

I also think it would be helpful to know what kinds of movies are available to rent from the video stores. It seems that one can rent virtually anything, but when I went to rent *Quadrophenia*, it was not available anywhere. Why is this?

I come from a relatively large city where many kinds of video systems are offered, and I think that others like myself would also like to know which ones are best.

J. Holmes
Flint, MI

Quadrophenia *has been shown on cable. Check for it, John.—Ed.*

EVER?

If John Richardson really hates arcades, why doesn't he just not go to them? I'm getting so tired of bad Andy Rooney imitations.

If all the guy is gonna do is bitch, how can you expect anybody to believe you?

How come so many old people are so down on the games anyway? What do they think anyway? Like we're going to go beat up old ladies in candy stores just to get a quarter to play a game.

Don't put any more of these people in your magazine, OK?

Donkey Kong King (get it?)
Downesworth, CN ■

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VIDIOTS IN THE NEWS

Michael N. Marks

PAC-MAN DEMANDS A SACRIFICE!

Robert Hays, star of *Airplane* and *Airplane II*, is *sorry* that he's made one too many *Airplane* movies—but not half as sorry as Johannes Pac-Man, famed bohemian video figure and carnivore! "I will *get* you, Robert Hays!" says the cute little cult hero. "I will get you and eat you up YUM-YUM wacka-wacka!" "Darn you!" retaliates Hays!

NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY ATARI

NEW YORK—Boardrooms at Warner Communications are still reverberating from shock waves following the announcement that its fourth quarter profits would drop some 50 percent due to Atari's inflated sales projections.

Two stockholders, Meryl and Richard Glovin, recently filed suit against Warners here, charging that Chairman Steven Ross sold some 140,000 shares of his stock prior to a Dec. 8 announcement that Atari would not perform to expectations.

Warner Communications previously revealed that other employees—including Atari Chairman Raymond Kassar and Executive Vice-President Dennis Groth—sold shares of Warner stock before the news was divulged.

Some financial experts contend that the sales are a possible violation of federal law prohibiting "insider trading."

When the Atari information was announced by Warners, the stock value dived about $25 a share.

The Glovin's class-action lawsuit joins several other legal challenges by investors. The Federal Trade Commission has also reportedly begun a probe into the matter.

It could not be substantiated that Bugs Bunny was being considered for a high-ranking executive post.

PUSH 'EM BACK

JACKSON, MI—A recently televised rerun of a high school cheering competition here was interrupted by a pornographic film clip lasting, oh, about three minutes or so.

"There is no explanation that *we* know of," said Jeffrey DeLorme, regional station manager of Jackson's Continental Cablevision. "To our knowledge, it did not originate from our offices."

The "explicit sex act" hit the screens at 11:30 p.m. and says Artie Davis, assistant cheering coach at Jackson High School, "really got everybody's attention."

Continental's DeLorme rationalizes that the clip was probably not beamed to "every" household: '"We received six phone calls, and we have 12,000 subscribers," said he. "That tells us it was a very small, isolated problem."

Coach Davis, however, painted a grim picture in contrast: "All my cheerleaders watched the show. Just *think* of the teenagers who saw it..."

OK, coach, *then* what?

CUSTER LOSES AGAIN

LAS VEGAS—The odds defied the most realistic tote boards here. Custer got beat by the Indians.

And women, it must be added.

Custer's Revenge—that controversial "X-rated" game cartridge that sparked widespread protests by Native Americans and women and a lawsuit by Atari—will soon disappear from the video scene.

The Game Source company has assumed sales and distribution rights for the adult video games manufactured by American Multiple Industries. Although Games Source will continue the "Swedish Erotica" line (which featured *Custer's Revenge, Bachelor Party* and *Beat 'Em & Eat 'em*), president Richard Miller said "racism and violence toward women have no place within the context of a TV game." Goodbye Custer.

Game Source will market eight new adult games under a new series title, "Playground," and will reduce prices from $49.95 to about $35. They will also package the Atari VCS-compatible cartriges in cases which can be locked.

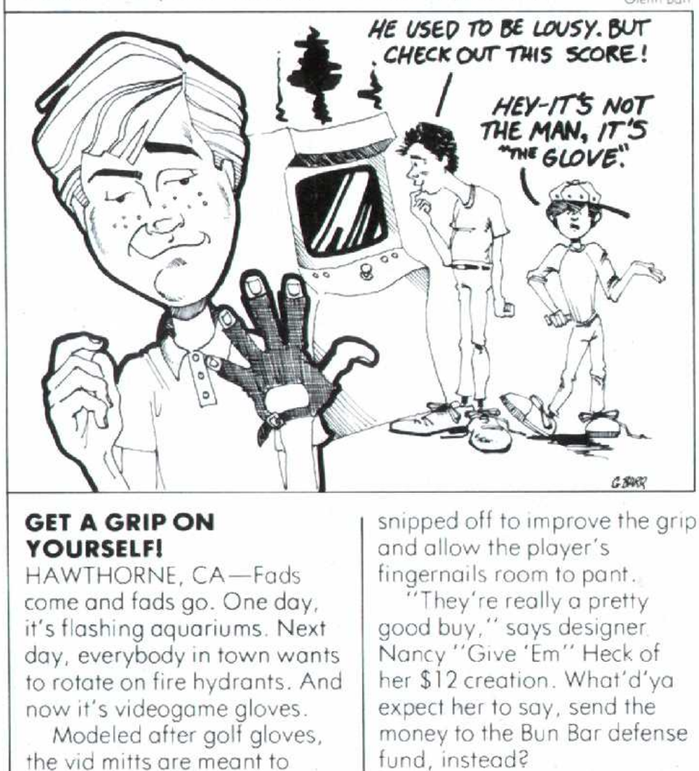
MORE SLEAZY BUSINESS

WASHINGTON—What could a man do after slashing mass transit subsidies, crushing the air traffic controllers' union, boosting gas taxes, cutting federal money for Conrail and chucking safety regulations?

Join the cable explosion, of course.

Drew Lewis resigned as Secretary of Transportation effective Feb. 1 to become the new chairman of

Glenn Barr


HE USED TO BE LOUSY. BUT CHECK OUT THIS SCORE!
HEY-IT'S NOT THE MAN, IT'S "THE GLOVE".
G.BARR

GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF!

HAWTHORNE, CA—Fads come and fads go. One day, it's flashing aquariums. Next day, everybody in town wants to rotate on fire hydrants. And now it's videogame gloves.

Modeled after golf gloves, the vid mitts are meant to ward off the very real formation of dreaded joy-callous and all shapes and sizes of blisters. The finger tops, interestingly enough, are snipped off to improve the grip and allow the player's fingernails room to pant.

"They're really a pretty good buy," says designer Nancy "Give 'Em" Heck of her $12 creation. What'd'ya expect her to say, send the money to the Bun Bar defense fund, instead?

The true usefulness is still unestablished. Remarked one unimpressed consumer, "You need videogame gloves like a sheep tick needs a hot comb."

VIDIOTS IN THE NEWS

Warner-Amex Cable.

Warner-Amex's current chairman, Gustave Hauser, left the company on the heels of serious setbacks for the corporation. Warner-Amex is a joint venture between Warner Communications and American Express, the sixth largest cable firm in the U.S.

Warner-Amex lost $20 million in 1981 and is predicted to lose $30 million in 1982.

At the press conference announcing his resignation, Lewis told reporters that he does not consider the company financially troubled.

However, he also admitted he has "great respect" for President Reagan.

FORGET ALL THAT, JUST LEAVE US ALONE!

NEW YORK CITY—A prominent New York child psychologist warns that videogames are leading young enthusiasts into a "life of loneliness."

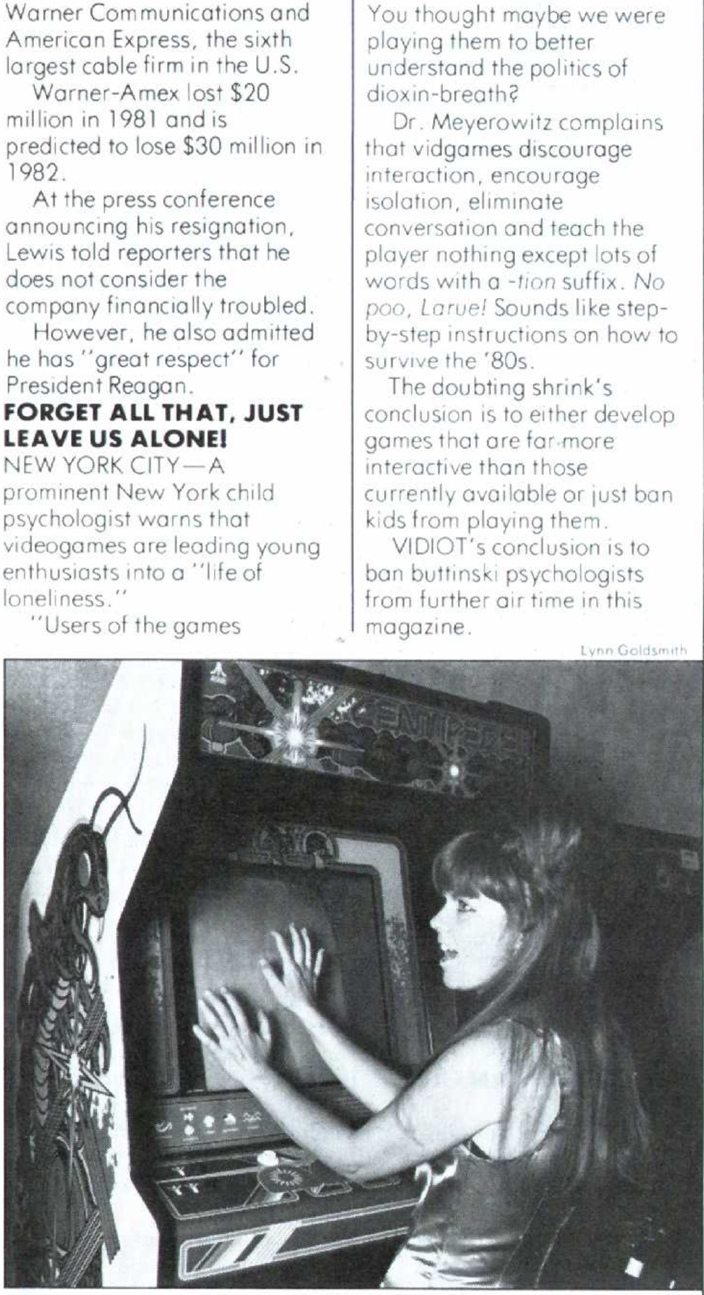
"Users of the games withdraw from reality," asserts Dr. Judith Meyerowitz, a clinical supervisor at Yeshiva University. "They're being given a positive reinforcement from the machine to continue." No kiddin', Doc! You thought maybe we were playing them to better understand the politics of dioxin-breath?

Dr. Meyerowitz complains that vidgames discourage interaction, encourage isolation, eliminate conversation and teach the player nothing except lots of words with a *-tion* suffix. *No poo, Larue!* Sounds like step-by-step instructions on how to survive the '80s.

The doubting shrink's conclusion is to either develop games that are far more interactive than those currently available or just ban kids from playing them.

VIDIOT's conclusion is to ban buttinski psychologists from further air time in this magazine.

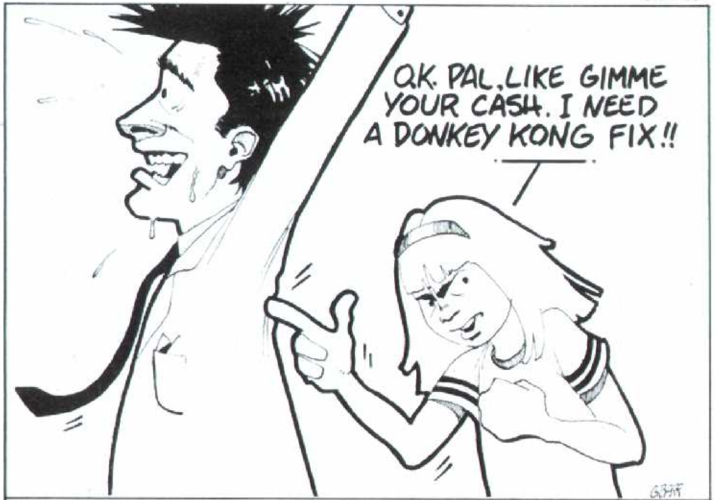
Lynn Goldsmith



TRANSFORMATION IS COMPLETE!

"Fred! *Come back!* insists Kate Pierson, but it's no use! Pierson, who with Fred Schneider and Cindy Wilson form the vocal core of the B-52's, seconds earlier watched partner Schneider decide that he'd much prefer the life of a Centipede arcade game than to continue on with his aggravating, wimpish, whining voice. A wise decision: "Uh, wait a minute Fred," decides Ms. Pierson. "Lemme get a few quarters first, *then* come back, OK?"

Glenn Barr


O.K. PAL, LIKE GIMME YOUR CASH. I NEED A DONKEY KONG FIX!!
GBARR

MORE CAREERS OF EVIL

WASHINGTON D.C.—A new study by the American Justice Institute has determined that, except for a rise in 1978, crimes by young people have dropped every year since 1975.

But not in Detroit, Danko.

Motor City metro police see an upsurge in juvenile crime there. And they're blaming it on kids who steal to feed hungry video habits. One suburban officer claimed he's seen kids swipe their parents jewelry to play Pac-Man.

Michigan State University psychologist Gary Stollack isn't surprised. "Anyone who becomes obsessed with something is likely to do crazy things," he said.

In an example police cite, an 11-year-old girl stole $50 from her mother's purse to play videogames. When she was apprehended later that afternoon, she had only $1.75 left.

Stollak says that obsessed people could "engage in criminal, anti-social and illegal behavior."

But spending 193 quarters? That's *inhuman*.

THAT'S NOT WHAT *I* READ

LOS ANGELES—Atari is rumored to be recruiting all kinds of hatchetmen to streamline its ailing operation. And to overcome a pervading rude mood in its press relations, the videogame/home computer giant has hired a newspaperman as its new Vice-President of Communications.

Bruce Entin, a business reporter for the *San Jose Mercury* and *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, views his new role as "a challenge."

And Evelyn Wood's new speed-reading course for the blind is "difficult."

EYE DUNNO

NEW YORK—Videogames can sharpen nine different visual skills simultaneously, reports *Business Week*, who probably know since Dr. Arnold Sherman, chairman of the Sports Vision section of the American Optimetric Association, told 'em so.

Among skills sharpened: dynamic visual acuity (the ability to see clearly while a target moves); ocular-motor ability (looking from one target to another without moving your head); central-peripheral awareness (contrating on one target while remaining aware of others).

Only danger, according to Sherman, is eyestrain. To give your eyes' focus muscles a break, he recommends halting your game every half-hour for five minutes and staring at a distant object.

No truth to rumors that Sherman then screamed "Like the *blackboard*, you jerks!"

VIDIOTS IN THE NEWS

OTTUMWA OLYMPICS 'INCREDIBLE'

OTTUMWA, IOWA— Soon, there'll be the endorsements—Chapstick, Clearasil—then the personal appearances—lunch in Boulder, a banquet in Biloxi. But for now, it's all the thrill of victory for the finalists in the North American Video Game Olympics, held Jan. 8-9 in Ottumwa, Iowa.

The near-winners are Darren Olson, 19, from Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Todd Walker, 19, from Milpitas, California; and Ben Gold, 16, from Dallas, Texas.

The complete list of whiz kids and video mutants who qualified to participate in the Olympics reads like a roll-call of world record-holders. Olson held the record for Centipede (15,204,350), Walker is a past champion of Super Pac-Man, and Gold once set the top mark for Stargate (some 40 million points).

The arcade olympians competed on five games: Super Pac-Man, Donkey Kong, Jr., Joust, Millipede and Frogger. Video Athletes played one game each except for Millipede, on which they played three times.

The Olympics were held at the Twin Galaxies Arcade & International Scoreboard here. ABC-TV's *That's Incredible* filmed the event and will host the finals, to be telecast in February.

How did these ambitious ersatz jocks "train" for the arduous eye-mind battles anyway? Juggle snakes?

Ben Gold laughed. "To 'prepare,' I just played eight or ten hours a day over Christmas vacation," Gold told VIDIOT. "Luckily, I work at an arcade."

Despite his rigorous exercises, Gold was disappointed in his Donkey King, Jr, performance ("the absolute worst," he moaned, "only 60,000"). However, he tore them up on Millipede, compiling over 640,000 points).

Walter Day—who owns Twin Galaxies and organized its sophisticated system of record-keeping—was happy. "There's never been anything like this," he smiled. "Boy, this is fun."

As for the future, Day says, "I'm planning to hold summer *and* winter olympics here."

Will the current video olympians keep their amateur standing? Probably. The three finalists were not awarded cash for their triumphs. They received all-expenses-paid trips to Hollywood—for the finals.

Not much.

Michael N. Marks

I NEED A CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Mr. and Mrs. John Cougar are seen here at a recent VIDIOT Christmas party held at the Midtown Cafe near VIDIOT HQ in Birmingham. Cougar was in town to plan his forthcoming collaboration with local musical legend Mitch Ryder. Ryder also showed up at the party as did the Rockets, Detroit media personalities and VIDIOT staff members, all playing video games to benefit area children's hospitals.

Ron Batzdorff/Star File

ESTRADA MARRIAGE SET!

Wacky *CHIPS* star Erik Estrada wants everyone in town to know he's having a good time with his life, and what better way to let VIDIOT's readership know about it than parading with *Clyde*, orangutan superstar and "one *nice* monkey, believe it!" according to those-in-the-know! The couple plan to keep their relationship a secret, but the grapevine reveals there are immediate plans for three flicks the pair want to do together, including *Monkey On A Moped, Hell's Chimps* and *I Am Curious, Fuzz*... "and much more, if you catch my drift," coos one gossip maven! That *Erik!*

IF IT JIGGLES CAN I *KEEP* IT, MOMMY?

NEW YORK—Former NBC prez Fred Silverman plans to launch a 24-hour cable network next year that will feature rock music videos, comedy segments, contests, polls and daytime shows "aimed at women."

You don't.

KILL THE SURGEON GENERAL!

GRAND HAVEN, MI—The surgeon general of the U.S. complains that videogames are dangerous. "Everything is elimate, kill, destroy, let's get up and do it fast," ranted C. Everett Koop. But some segments of society yearn for the opportunities videogames afford them.

At the Shore Haven Nursing Home here, patients grab the video consoles every chance they get.

"Even our stroke victims find this really refreshing," commented director Christy Tavener.

"It's about all the action we get," laughed one oldster. "So we'll wait in line for Ms. Pac-Man."

NOW *COUGH!*

CHICAGO—A new game called Bugs And Drugs, played on computer terminals, is helping University Of Illinois med students learn how to operate.

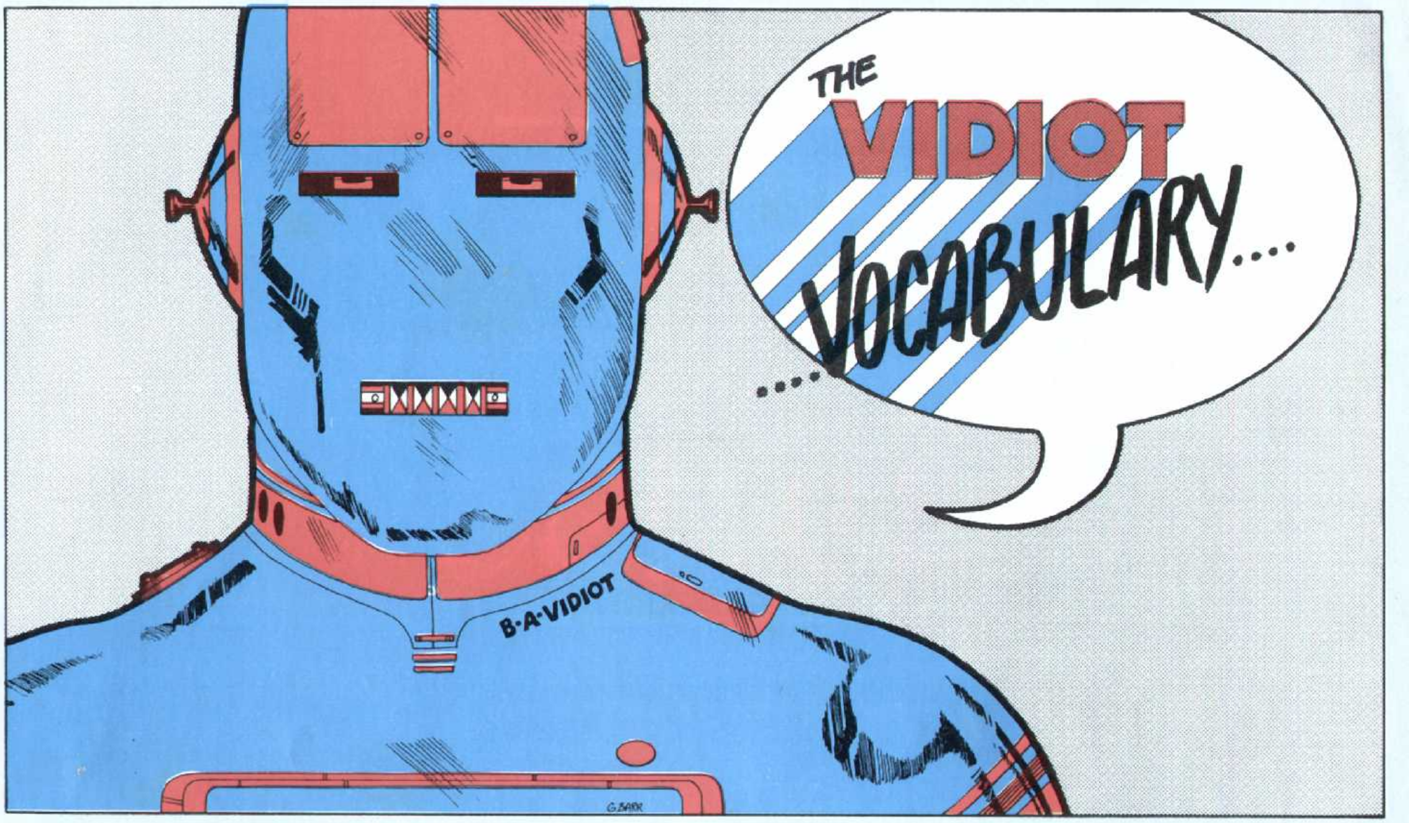
"You can't play this for more that 15 minutes and not start learning some infectious disease," says Dr. Fred Zar, bigwig at the U of I Medical Center. "It's a lot of fun, but it's unbelievably educational." The game player begins as an average premed student and gradually builds up enough game experience to move from internship to Nobel Laureate.

"You enter the hospital armed with a minimal supply of antibiotics," says Doc Zar. "Your quest is to make it to the 12th floor of the hospital, where the Journal Club is located."

Between 150 and 200 different germs can be encountered on the way up, beginning with ordinary strep throat and progressing to more exotic bugs on the way up. "You have to choose the best antibiotic before it kills *you*," Doc says.

"I would say that probably only one percent or less of people who play the game become Nobel Laureates and make it to the 12th floor."

That the other 99 percent "just have drinking problems" or else "are *unaccountably run over by a fleet of busses*" is patently untrue and was, in fact, never brought up. ■



BY DOUG HELLER

As a Vidiot, you already know what we're talking about. But as a service to some of our newer readers just noticing the world of video that's surrounding them—and interested in learning more about—we're providing a list of words commonly used in video. These are Words that any Vidiot knows the meaning to—the Vidiot understands vidgames, cable and computers better than the back of his hand (he's always busy staring into the screen). But these are also words that the beginning Vidiot might use a little help with. Just don't tell anyone that you learned to speak Vidiot from us. It's really something that you should learn yourself.

APPLE—The generic term for home computers.
ARCADE—The Vidiot's hang-out.
ATARI—Generic term for videogames.
BETA—The fraternity.
BITS & BYTES—A Vidiot's diet.
CABLE—The thing that made Ted Turner cool.
CHIPS—A TV show about California motorcycle cops.
COIN RETURN—Doesn't work.
COMPUTER—*Time* magazine's Man of the Year.
CONSOLE—What a videogame winner does to a loser
DUPE—Someone tricked into buying a copy of the original.
E.T.—Extra Tokens.
FIRE BUTTON—The G-spot.
FLOPSIES—Halter tops.
FREE MAN—Someone not addicted to videogames.
GRAPHICS—X-rated video games.
HARD DISCS—Records by the Misfits.
HARDWARE—Jeans that won't bend at the knees.
HIGH SCORE—What Pac-Man gets on Saturday nights.
INSTRUCTIONS—Incomplete directions.
JOYSTICK—An electronic device that aims to please.
MTV—MonoTonous Video.
PAC-MAN—Arcade owners who pack 'em in.
POINTS—What you rack up for a job well done.
QUARTER—A percentage of your money spent on videogames.
SOFT WARE—What a disappointed girl asks her too-drunk date.
STRATEGY—Doesn't work.
TOKENS—Minority videogame players.
TOGGLE SWITCH—A kinky game that Toggles play.
VCR—A Video Cash Register, found in back of all arcades.
VHS—A Very Happy Sucker who bought incompatible home video equipment.
THE VIDEO EXPLOSION—What Wendy O. Williams does to TV sets.
"VIDEOS"—Commercials for rock 'n' roll records.
VIDIOT—The new race of superbeing; also, this *magazine*, dummy!
ZONE—The state a VIDIOT finds himself in after a day of gaming. ■

STOCKS AND BOMBS

BEHIND THE WALL STREET VIDIOCY

BY P. GREGORY SPRINGER

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the stock market, not a space creature was selling, not even Atari.

Actually, it was December 8th when Warner Communications Inc., parent corporation for Atari video games, admitted that their year hadn't been that hot, that—in fact—stockholders could probably expect their shares to be about a dollar down from expectations, from $5.25 predicted to maybe $4.25 or less. Atari stock quickly plunged a high dive—down over 16 points on the New York Stock Exchange following the announcement. In a few days, the stock was down even more, some 23 points.

Gulp. Unlike video gamers, when players of the stock market run a losing streak, they have bigger problems than sore trigger fingers and a shortage of quarters. We're talking *millions of dollars* at stake.

Atari shuffled its feet and admitted it had a slow year, and other stocks followed suit. Mattel, the leading competitor, claimed a loss for the fourth quarter of 1982, and began to offer a $50 rebate for purchase of its Intellivision game machine.

Unlike video gamers, when players of the stock market run a losing streak, they have bigger problems than sore trigger fingers.

Coleco Industries, new kid on the block, dropped 3.25 points. Tandy, manufacturer for the Radio Shack computer and retailer of videogames, dropped 6 points. Commodore and Texas Instruments, personal computer makers, also dropped when the news was heard.

What happened? What did the slump mean for the average video player on the street? Are games on the way out?

Not hardly. While the news came unexpectedly to most people—retailers and stock players alike—some of the people at Atari shrewdly profited from the bad news. Warner Communications chairman Steven Ross had sold 140,000 of his shares in the stock at a time when it seemed blue-chip. That move, which was only revealed days later, dealt Ross a cool profit of $1.5 million in savings.

On the day before the announcement, The *New York Times* business pages boasted about the strength of the video games industry. The headline called it "The Video Game Explosion." (This was not the first time the Times had used misdirected logic regarding retail consumer products. When Tylenol virtually disappeared in a poison panic, a Times writer claimed only a miracle could save the brand name. Instead, druggists hoarded "black market" bottles for eager headache fans, and soon even the

Illustration by Al Brandtner

BOOM or BUST
25
25

capsules will be back in "tamper-free" bottles.)

Anyone should have seen it coming. In June there were only 100 different game cartridges available. By December, over 400 titles were out on the streets, and the number was growing. Retailers ran out of space to stock the games, and consumers got selective. No longer were games being bought simply because they were what was on hand; players got picky.

"E.T. is a bomb," claimed Bob Abbiante of the Sounds Alive retail chain, referring to the Atari videogame version of the Universal movie. "Having a film title on your cartridge makes no difference," he said. "People are not asking for Raiders of the Lost Ark, people are not asking for E.T." Abbiante blamed poor graphics and "rushed-out" games as the cause of the failure. Some had predicted that the E.T. game would sell as many as 8 million units, with a wholesale take of $190 million for the game. Now, expectations only reach one to two million in sales.

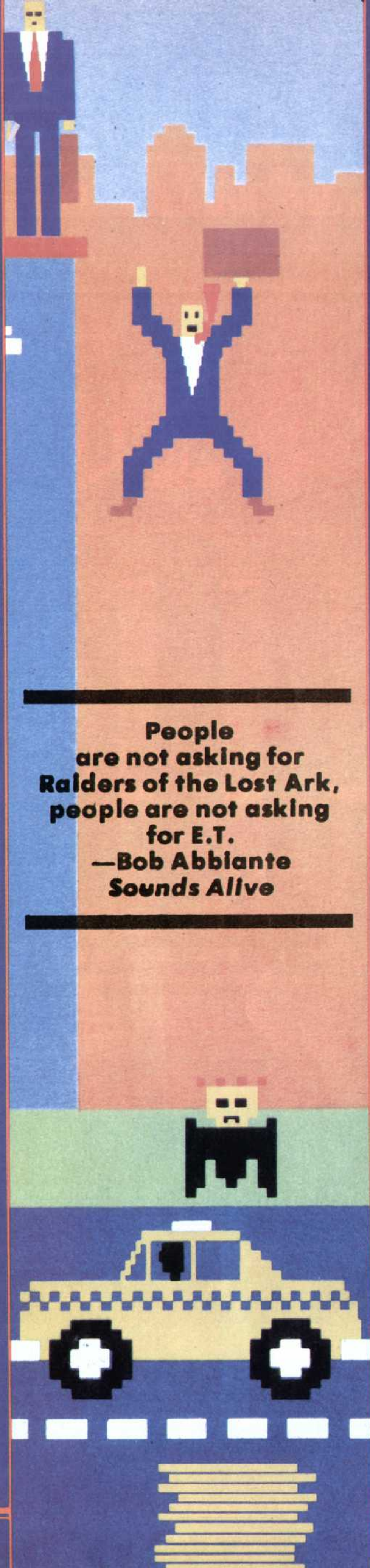
What is selling, instead, are games players ask for by reputation for playing well, two examples being Parker Brothers' Frogger and Activision's Pitfall.

One unworried spokesman from Parker Brothers, Rich Stearns, told *Variety* when the market seemed shakiest, "If the game isn't any good you're not going to fool that 10-year-old boy out there. What may be Atari's problem right now is not the industry's problem. There's no question about it. Atari saw a big opportunity to cash in on a high potential (with E.T.). They wanted to hit Christmas."

Instead, *Variety* commented, "Atari seems to have gotten hit." Reports indicated that Atari paid $21 million just for the rights to make a videogame out of *E.T.*

Heads rolled. When Warners made their announcement, *Wall Street Journal* wrote about "the horror of investors in video game stocks," and noted that Wall Street was "stunned." Perry Odak, president of the consumer products division of Atari, was "relieved of all his duties." Two other senior executives in the videogame and home computer division, Lee Henderson and Thomas McDonough, were also dismissed, after having been recruited to the company only that year.

Atari leads the videogame pack, but being number one apparently isn't easy. Apart from the firings and the slump, Atari has become greatly more complicated since the founding days in 1972 when Nolan Bushnell brought Pong to the masses and created a monster. Warner purchased Atari for $28 million in 1976, a minor cost for a major enterprise that some have called "the greatest acquisition in history." In November of 1982, three former Warner executives were convicted of fraudulently arranging the company's purchase of stock in a movie theatre, getting $170,000 in bribes that went into a secret cash fund. The federal prosecutor claimed that "the real culprit" was Steven J. Ross, the company's chairman and the guy who'd just made a bundle juggling his Atari stock.



People are not asking for Raiders of the Lost Ark, people are not asking for E.T.
—Bob Abbiante
Sounds Alive

Atari isn't idle itself in courtroom action. It sues other video game companies frequently. In the U.S., Atari has sued and won patent battles. Last spring, N.V. Phillips of the Netherlands was enjoined from selling a video game called K.C. Munchkin that Atari said was a copy of its Pac-Man home cartridge. An Atari lawyer has been quoted saying that the company already has been successful in France, England, Hong Kong and Japan in fighting copyright problems with competitors. Currently, Atari has been waging a battle against Coleco Industries, the plastic backyard swimming pool company which entered the video game market this year with a super bang. Atari, asking $350 million in damages, charges that Coleco has infringed their patent and waged "unfair competition." Specifically, the suit names an adapter that, hooked up to ColecoVision's game unit, plays cartridges designed for the Atari VCS 2600 videogame player. Coleco filed an anti-trust countersuit, asking $500 million, claiming Atari intends to monopolize the market.

The truth is that as recently as spring of 1982, Atari controlled nearly three-quarters of the home videogame market. But since then, everyone's Aunt Edith has entered the market, and Atari controlled only 56 percent by year's end.

Despite the final lap slump for 1982, Coleco still turned up in the ratings as one of the year's top ten selling stocks.

"I can't begin to handle everything," lamented an owner of a record store that carries videogames on the side. "It's getting to be like the record business. You have to stock the hit games, because that's what people walk in and ask for."

Variety bannered the headline on page one of their last issue of 1982, "Vidgames Save Disk Chain Sales," which in Varietiese means that home videogame cartridges had given a profit to record outlets during an era when recording and vinyl was suffering.

So while turmoil seems to be the order of the day on Wall Street (what else is new?), the growing industry for games themselves seems to have only hit a temporary snag, due largely to the burst-at-the-seams growth in 1982. The market was glutted, but nobody had a finger in the dam. All fingers were, instead, fondling joysticks blindly.

All fingers except those manipulating behind the scenes at Atari. ■

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

BY RICHARD ROBINSON

As an electronic swami of sorts, I get quite a few phone calls from friends, friends of friends, and strangers who've been given my phone number. These calls all center around the big question: "I've got the money, I want to buy a new machine, but I don't know which one to get!"

I drag out my crystal, consult the entrails of my favorite circuit board, and slyly ask how much the caller has to spend. If it is a reasonable amount in relation to the machine desired, I suggest the caller buy any machine in that price category that he/she thinks looks good.

"But what about the sound? Or the picture? Or isn't Sony better than Panasonic?" moans the caller, not at all convinced that buying a machine should be based on the color scheme of the machine case.

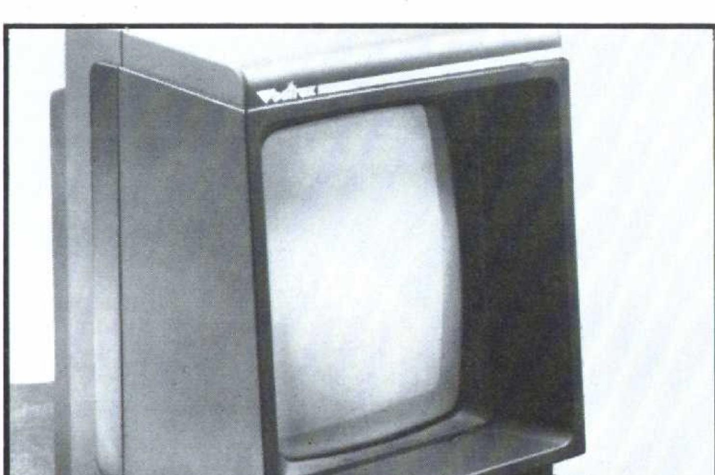
I suggest that most of these machines are made by the same three guys in a basement in Tokyo. I also suggest that in any particular price range just about every name brand manufacturer makes a reliable product. If all this wisdom fails, I engage the caller in an intense discussion of signal-to-noise ratios thus effectively ending the conversation.

The truth is that in today's electronic marketplace there are just too many machines to choose from to make a really specific recommendation as to which is better than the next. And don't think you can rush down to your local electronics store and try them all out, because there are so many that most electronics stores don't even stock them all, so comparison shopping is nearly impossible. No, it does get down to the color of the case once the price range and machine-type has been determined.

Fortunately, the keen competition among manufacturers assures that most machines in any particular price range offer very similar functions, reliability and design. Some just have more knobs than others. Some are silver plastic, some are black plastic.

This is all well and good when buying a stereo amplifier, or a Walkman-type cassette player, or a 19" color TV. The guide lines are simple: make sure it's a Japanese brand name, and make sure some other store isn't selling it for less.

But there are some items



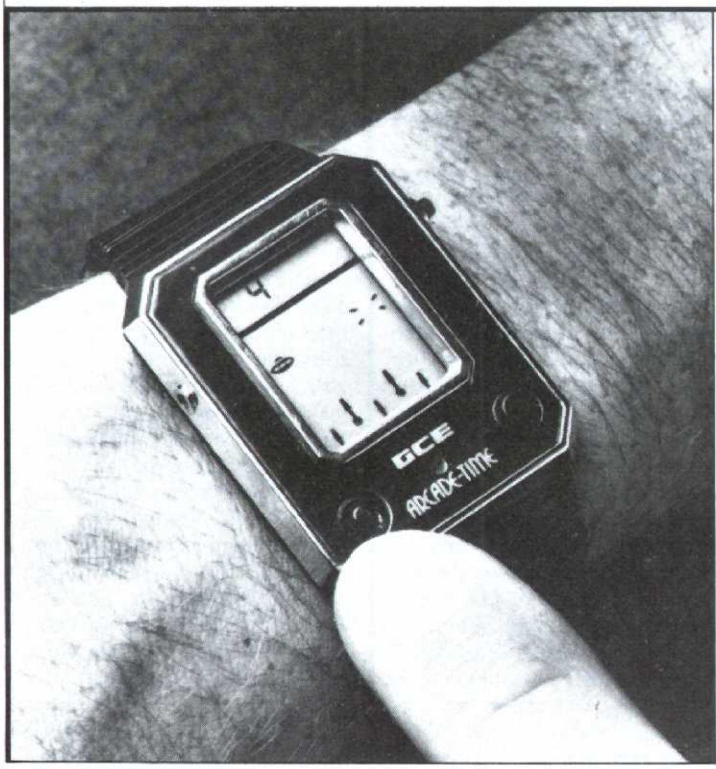
3-D Rotations

Most video home machines use the home TV screen as their playing field. This is not the case with the GCE Vectrex game system, which retails for about $200 and has its own special TV screen. The advantage of this system is that the screen is actually a 9" black and white vector monitor, similar to the kind of screens used in arcade games. The result is that the computer can generate many special visual effects, such as 3-D rotation and zoom, that you won't see on home TV screen games. Also, if you'll look at the picture, you'll note the screen is on its side in relation to the normal home screen.

With a built-in eight bit microprocessor, special screen, full sound effects and a 360 degree self-centering joystick, the Vectrex is really a small arcade machine for the home.

Among the games available so far for the Vectrex (carts retail for about $30) are Scramble, Berzerk, Star Trek, Rip-off, and Space-Wars.

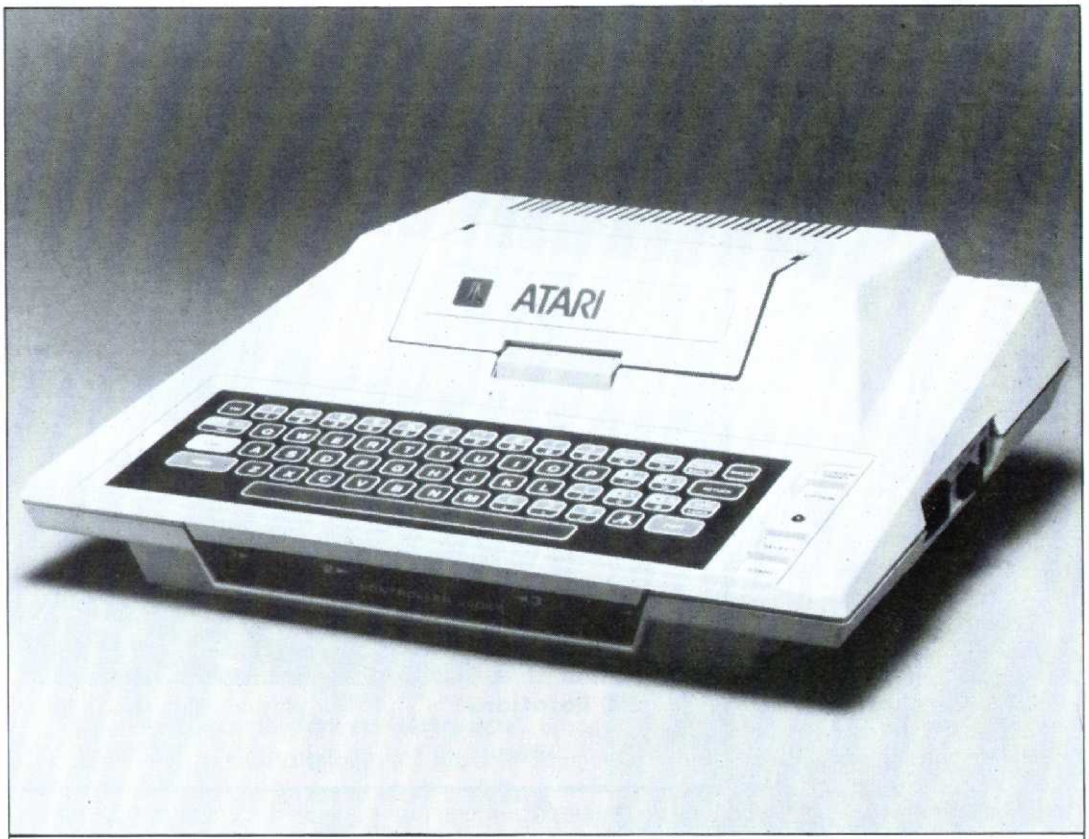
An interesting approach to home game technology.



Wrist Action

A number of digital watch and video game manufacturers are offering video games that strap on your wrist. Some of them throw in a game with a digital watch as an "extra," such as Casio. Others are making games that throw in the time as an extra. Among these are the Nelsonic Pac-Man game watch. You can get one of these for about $30, and it features two game modes, sound effects, and game freeze control. Then there's GCE's ArcadeTime game watches (about $40 retail), that feature four different space games in one watch and include a tiny joystick and firing button.

While none of these game watches are nearly as interesting as home or arcade games, they are lots of fun to play if you spend a lot of time on busses, trains, or planes.


The Atari 400—versatile in both form and function.

where this rule of thumb doesn't work. These machines are either unique, or so expensive that not as many companies are making them to compete with the consumer dollar, or so new that they haven't achieved the all-pretty-much-the-same standards of cassette players or color TVs.

Two still-exotic machine categories are home computers and video projectors. In both of these categories, the consumer can get taken for a ride and wind up with a machine that doesn't live up to expectations. In *these* categories the consumer is strongly advised to ignore the color of the case and the name brand status, and do some real homework as to what each machine does and how well it does it.

Home computers: Yes, you can buy a home computer for $75, like the Timex-Sinclair, or for $160 like the Vic-20, or the Atari 400 for $254.95 (current NYC discount prices). You can also buy an Apple II "Family System" for about $1,800 or a Franklin Ace "Home Accountant System" for about $1,650. Or an IBM Personal Computer for a good deal more.

They're all "home" computers, but with a price range of $75 to $3,000, they have differences that suggest the consumer has to be wide awake no matter what home computer he/she is buying.

Considering the low-priced, under $500 computers, there are two drawbacks which must be taken into account. First, some of these low priced computers don't have real typewriter keyboards. This is a serious drawback to anyone who intends to use a home computer as a meaningful home thinking machine. It is one reason why the Vic-20 from Commodore is an exceptional buy among the many low-priced machines. Second, most low-priced computers aren't really low-priced at all—it's just that the manufacturer is selling you *some* of the computer to start with, and then if you want to have a complete computer system, you have to buy all the extras..which often add up to the price of an Apple II, Franklin Ace, or Osbourne.

Another serious consideration with any low-priced computer is what programs are available for the computer. Believe me, you won't be sitting around writing your own programs, any more than you'd want to stay up nights writing your own videogames. Program writing is an art in and of itself, and most serious

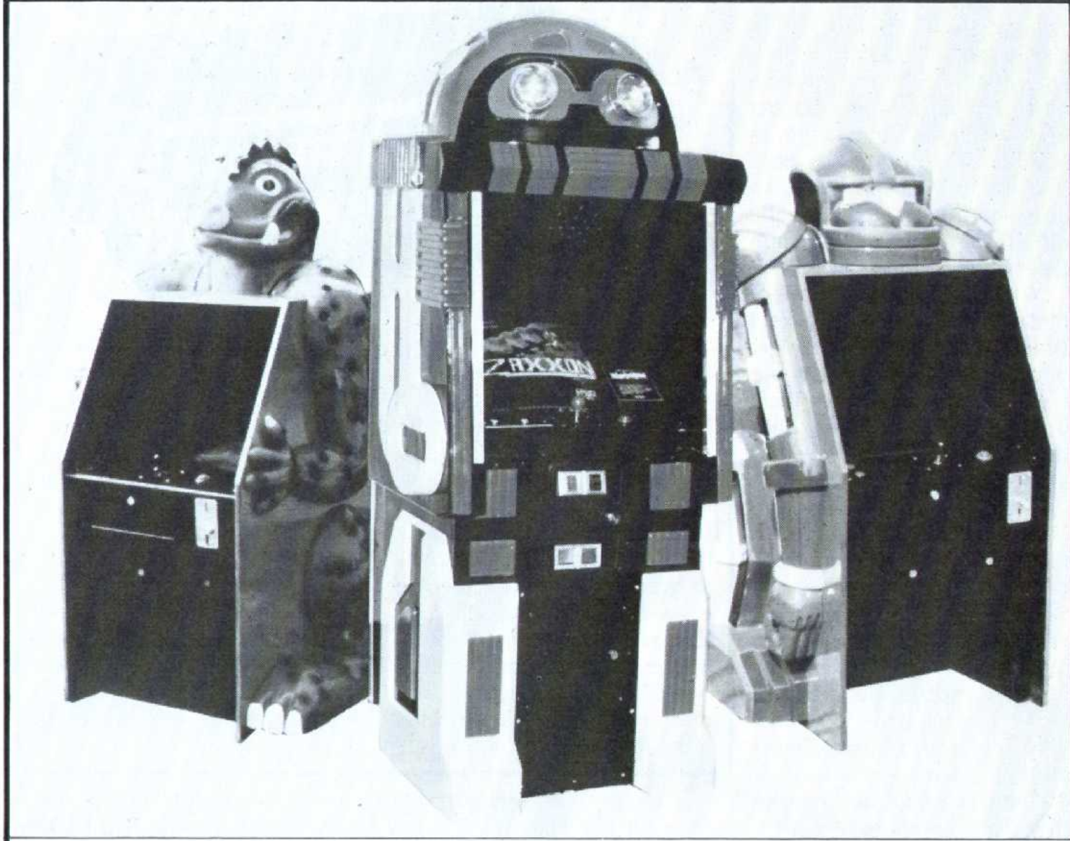
Blaster Components

It's getting more and more difficult to define the dividing line between a stereo system and a ghetto blaster these days, expecially with the new component blaster systems which can be latched together to carry around or broken down into various pieces to set-up at home. A good example of this is the new Sanyo C2 which retails for a surprisingly low $169.95 and has enough features to keep you busy for hours trying to figure out what does what when and how.

The Sanyo C2 has two detachable speakers each, with a 4" woofer and piezo tweeter, operates on batteries (6 D cells) as well as any voltage AC available on the planet, has a five segment LED meter system, built-in mikes, automatic lever recording controls, jacks so you can plug in a turntable or headphones, metal tape capability, and Dolby noise reduction.

computer users (as opposed to computer wizards) want to use their computer, not struggle with it. Low-priced computers with limited memory storage (you need at least 32K of memory, preferably 64K) and cassette rather than disc drive information storage just won't do all the things you've been led to assume a computer should do.

So if you want to buy a low priced computer as a toy, or as a curiosity piece, or just to say you have one, any one of them will do. But if you plan to compute with your computer, you're much better off spending $1,500 or more, or nothing. And if you're planning to use your computer as a game machine as well as a computer, be warned that the games that are available for most low-priced home computers, are fairly simple-minded and dull compared to the game carts you can get for the home game computers from Atari, Intellivision, and Coleco.



Machine Men

If the arcade games in this photo look a little different it's because they are, from left to right, The Monster, The Robot, and The Space Monkey, whch Sega has introduced as new housings for their arcade games. All of Sega's current games (such as Zaxxon) will be available in these new 'character' cabinets, although Sega says production quantities will be limited. Frankly, we think this is a pretty brilliant, if simple and direct move on the part of Sega, since it takes the arcade game one step forward away from the pin-ball machine design on which all screen games were originally based. The next step of course will be to animate these cabinets so they become part of the game displayed on their chest screens. And after that...?

Video Projectors may be a totally different type of machine than home computers, but the same kind of intelligent buying is necessary to ensure the consumer that he/she doesn't wind up with something that doesn't do the job imagined. First off, don't go out and buy any video projection system that isn't a name brand. There are all sorts of do-it-yourself, Rube Goldberg projection systems lurking about, but none of them will give you the kind of big picture you imagine a video projector should deliver. There are no bargains, although the current price of a good projector from Sony, Panasonic, or other name brand manufacturers is surprisingly low, in many cases being discounted down to $1,700 or so.

There are three kinds of video projectors, each having its own advantages. The one I find the least attractive is the type that looks like an oversized TV set, which rear projects inside the cabinet onto a giant plastic TV screen. The other two systems are both front projection methods, and frankly I find the picture to be much sharper and brighter on these machines.

One of these front projection systems is an all-in-one cabinet where the front swings forward when in use to reflect the picture onto the screen. Sony, RCA, and other manufacturers make a machine like this, and it is very effective, if somewhat gigantic.

To my mind the best system is the two-piece system which consists of a screen and then a projection unit. The problem with this is that the projection unit has to sit a certain distance in front of the screen—and you better make sure you have room to put it where you want to use it. Sony, Koss, and others make this type of system, and the picture is excellent, as well as amazing.

Projectors also come with different screen sizes, ranging from 50" screens to 72" screens. Don't make the mistake of thinking that the bigger the screen the better. Depending on the size of the room you use the machine in, the distance you want to sit from the screen, and the number of people who'll probably watch at once, you may find that the 50" screen is quite effective and big enough to do the job.

Video projectors are especially effective for watching movies and sports. The novelty of watching the nightly news or playing video games on them quickly wears off. So how much enjoyment you get out of a video projector really depends on what you watch on your TV.

Speaker Boost

Until you've heard them, you won't believe the job they do. The "power booster" speakers available for Walkman-type cassette players are sold from $6.95 to $50, depending on the size and the make. They may seem like a pretty useless accessory, but the truth is that a few of them will let your Walkman outblast all but the largest ghetto blaster.

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

Especially effective is the Rokina (Model PS-388) which puts out a very loud, full-bodied sound from any cassette player, and is very compact and reasonably lightweight. In addition, the Rokina has bass and treble boost switches so you can adjust the cassette player sound (most Walkman types have no tone control).

When considering any of these power boost speakers (they have built-in amplifiers and run on batteries or optional AC adaptors) turn them up loud. The cheaper ones don't go very loud before they start to distort. But units like the Rokina (which is discounting for about $50) pump out a lot of sound before they reach distortion levels.

With a Walkman-type player, FM tuner cassette, and a pair of these speakers you can have a complete sound system that is ultimately portable, very tiny, and compares more than favorably with most of the integrated blaster systems that cost a good deal more.

Beta Bargain

While we're big boosters of VHS when it comes to the most popular home video system available, it's difficult to ignore this new Beta machine from Sanyo. The VCR3900 is the first home video machine to break the $400 price barrier, with the machine selling as low as $350 at some discount houses. With a comparable in overall basic quality VHS machine selling for up to $100 more, this new Beta from Sanyo makes it possible to have a complete home video set-up for a very reasonable amount. The Sanyo Betacord 3900 features a programable timer to allow recording of any one program up to three consecutive days in the future, high-speed search to scan the picture at nine times normal speed, two-speed operation (Beta II or Beta III, note: it will not play or record Beta I tapes), and instant freeze frame.

Walkaround Runaround

Trying to figure out which Walkman is which these days is more than complicated, you need a map! Sony now has a good half-dozen Walkman players / players-recorders/ players-recorders-radios on the market. As far as we can figure out, The Walkman 1 is now the Walkman 4, the Walkman 2 is now the Walkman 5, and, depending on who you talk to, some of the Walkmans have been discontinued to be replaced by other Walkmans with other model numbers.

Among the Walkmans that are worth checking out if you're planning to buy a personal stereo are the Walkman 2, the most compact and handy of all the Walkman series when it comes to playing back stereo cassettes; the Walkman 4, which is slightly more bulky than the Walkman 2, but surprisingly inexpensive and does the job; the Walkman WM-F2 which features FM stereo, plus stereo record (this unit has no built-in mikes, but Sony is making a tiny T-shaped stereo mike module that plugs into the unit, although you may have to search some to find it); and the Walkman WM-R2, which has built-in stereo mikes for stereo record and playback and is available in black, to make it the best looking of all the Walkman currently available.

Video Camera Surprise

While the prices of VHS and Beta home recorders have been coming down steadily, until recently there wasn't much action in the video camera/portable deck area. Now Sharp has introduced their VC-3500 system which included a portable VHS deck (with tuner/timer) and a color camera (weighing it at 2½ pounds) with a discount price less than $1,000, or to put it in terms of the competition, you can now get a VHS with camera for about the same price you'd pay for a top of the line home VHS alone. If you've always wanted to make your own television, now's the time to start checking out this Sharp and the new lower priced camera/deck technology that is sure to follow.

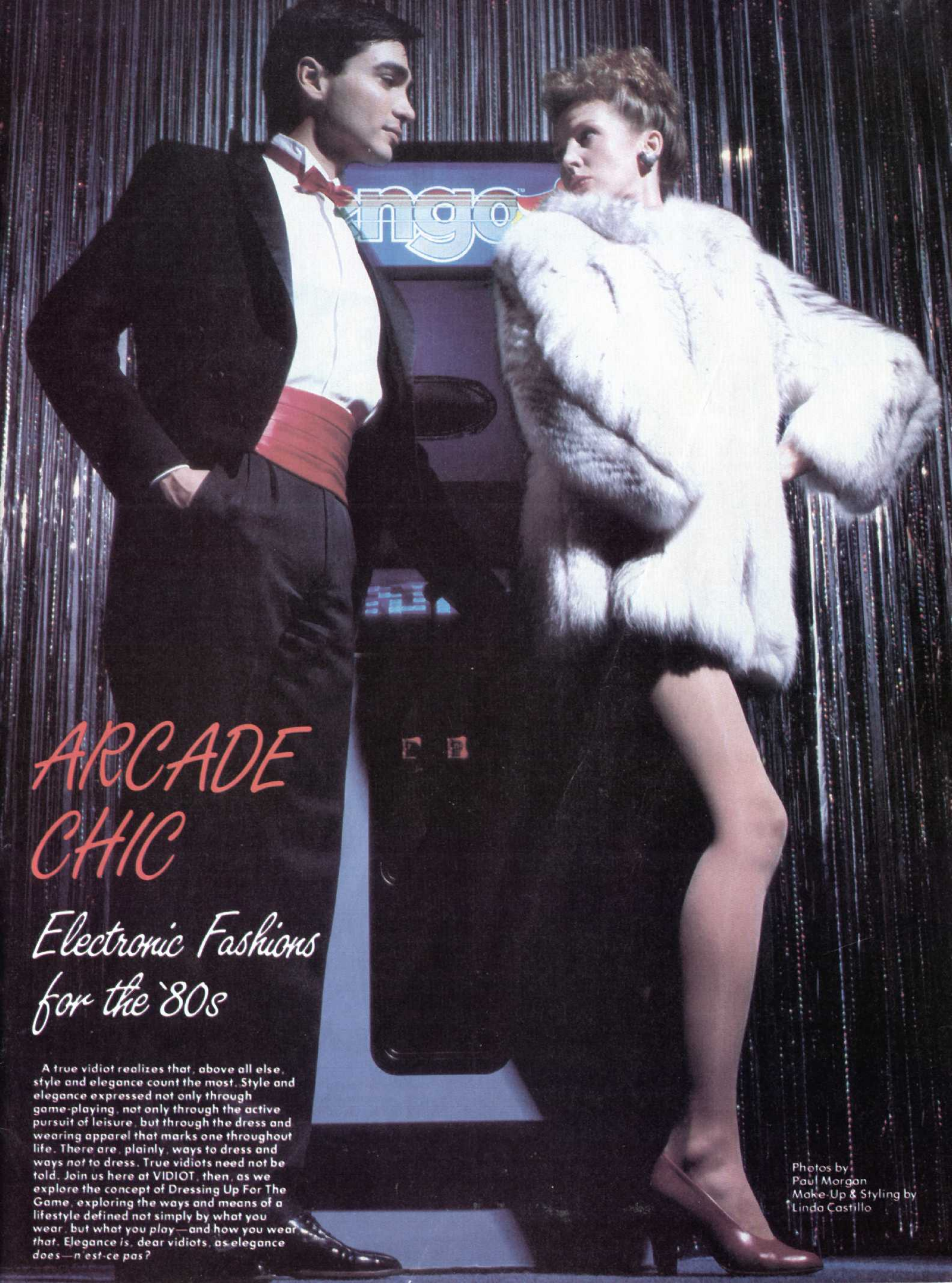
Panasonic Link

Panasonic has introduced a hand-held computer that fits in a briefcase along with a telephone modem. Called The Link, this unit is obviously designed for businesspersons who want to patch into their home office computer while on the road. But like all computers, it will do what the user and the available programs allow. The Link sells for $319 with 4K memory, and $399 with 8K memory. Among the peripherals now available are a 15 character printer for only $189, a 40 character printer for $250, a TV adaptor, acoustic modem, extra memory (up to 16 K for an additional $289), and a number of programs including Porta Writer, Porta Calc, and Scientific Calculator.

Computer Controls

Arcade and home video games and home computers arent the only technologies that are taking advantage of the current level of computer sophistication. Sony for one has taken the computer and put it into a cassette deck to create the world's first fully-computerized cassette machine.

The Sony TC-FX1010 isn't cheap (it retails for $650), but it is the first of what will probably be a whole series of computer controlled sound system machines. Just about everything to do with this new Sony is automatic, in the sense that the built-in computer runs the machine. Of course you still have to touch the button (you don't push this button, just touch it), but then the computer takes over doing everything, from setting tape and record calibrations to remembering the level settings to turning itself on and off.



ARCADE CHIC

Electronic Fashions for the '80s

A true vidiot realizes that, above all else, style and elegance count the most. Style and elegance expressed not only through game-playing, not only through the active pursuit of leisure, but through the dress and wearing apparel that marks one throughout life. There are, plainly, ways to dress and ways *not* to dress. True vidiots need not be told. Join us here at VIDIOT, then, as we explore the concept of Dressing Up For The Game, exploring the ways and means of a lifestyle defined not simply by what you wear, but what you *play*—and how you wear that. Elegance *is*, dear vidiots, as elegance does—*n'est-ce pas?*

Photos by
Paul Morgan
Make-Up & Styling by
Linda Castillo

ATARI
POLE POSITION
FINAL CORNER
HAIRPIN TURN
0.5km RADIUS TURN
FIRST CORNER
POSITION
INSTRUCTIONS

ATARI
POLE
POSITION

MIDWAY
Bally
PAC-MAN

(At left) Aliens *touched* my space suit...Tim breaks out the leathers to play macho and feels a bit schizophrenic, thank you...His alter ego dudes up in a driving suit stolen from Paul Newman, and vainly battles for Pole Position.

What happens when preppette meets Val? Absolutely nothing! The girls celebrate being and nothingness by matching wits with Ms. Pac-Man and getting smashed! Get *real*, why don't you? *I mean...*

OK, so *what* if army fatigues are the latest thing among the swingin' 60-year-old set; you started wearing these bozo rags first, and by crackey, you aren't going to give your pretty pants up for any grandma! Just so they don't *hurt you*...

Happy Tim's finally found a woman who can beat him at Q*Bert...and has good taste in socks! "None of that Hanes business, I like fake '50s designs with figures on them and stuff" quipped the articulate Tim. Carey enjoys the unique sensation *only sitting on a video game* can produce...

Fashions courtesy of Valente's Formal Wear, Dittrich Furs, Mark Keller, Incognito, It's The Ritz and Joe's Army & Navy Surplus.

1. How often do you go to video arcades?
☐More than once a day
☐Once a day
☐3 times a week
☐Twice a week
☐Once a week
☐Once every 2 weeks
☐Once a month
☐Less than once a month
☐Never

2. Do you play at more than one arcade?
☐Yes ☐No

3. How long do you spend at the arcade, on the average, each time you go?
☐More than 4 hours
☐3-4 hours
☐2-3 hours
☐1-2 hours
☐½ to 1 hour
☐less than ½ hour
☐Don't go

4. On the average how much money do you spend a week on video games?

5. How many different video games do you usually play each time you go to an arcade?
☐1 only
☐1 or 2
☐3 or 4
☐5 or 6
☐7 or more

6. What is your favorite video game?

7. What do you especially like about them? (Check as many as apply)
☐Killing aliens
☐Cute video characters
☐Team sport similarity
☐Adventure story format
☐Calculating strategies
☐Electronic sounds
☐Outer space simulation

8. How do you find out about new video games? (Check as many as apply)
☐Newspaper ads or reviews
☐Magazine ads or reviews
☐Hearing about them from friends
☐Seeing them in an arcade

9. Do you have a Home Video Game system?
☐Yes ☐No

10. Do you own☐ or plan to own☐ (Check if applicable) one of the following systems:
☐ Atari VCS☐Colecovision☐Other
☐Mattel Intellivision ☐Atari 5200

11. Do you have MTV cabled into your home?
☐Yes☐No

12. If not, do you want it? ☐Yes☐No

13. Is rock music played at your arcade?
☐Yes☐No

14. In order to play videogames, do you spend spend less of your entertainment dollars on other items/events? ☐Yes☐No

15. If yes, please indicate those items/events which receive less of your dollars (mark a, b, c, in order of those receiving less of your $$)
☐Records/pre-recorded tapes
☐Magazines
☐Concerts
☐Movies
☐Sport Events

16. Do you have either of the following items in your household? (Check if applicable)
☐Video cassette recorder
☐Video disc player

17. What was your favorite feature in this issue of VIDIOT?

18. If you have a home computer, what model is it?

19. What would you like to see in future issues of VIDIOT?

Enclose in envelope and mail to: **VIDIOT** Readers Survey, P.O. Box P-1064, Birmingham, MI 48012

NAME ________________ Age ______

ADDRESS ________________

CITY ________________

STATE ____________ ZIP ________

VIDIOT
BONUS! PULL-OUT POSTER
THE MAGAZINE OF VIDEO LUNACY
ARCADE ANIMOSITY
HOME GAMES '83
ARCADE INJURY REPORT
CHEAP! MORE PLAY! LESS PAY!
INSIDE ATARI'S E.T. GAME
MTV ROCKS! • PAC-MAN SELLS OUT!

Pick It Up While It's *Hot!!*

Now that you've picked up the latest issue of VIDIOT, we'd like to know what you think! As fellow vidiots in this thing together, we created VIDIOT especially for you! That's right. It's *your* magazine! Is there something that you'd especially like to see in VIDIOT? Let us know by filling in the survey at left! Something you enjoyed or didn't enjoy? Something we left out? Keep VIDIOT *your* magazine by filling out those questions and mailing it today...while it's still *hot!!!*

photo by Omar Newman

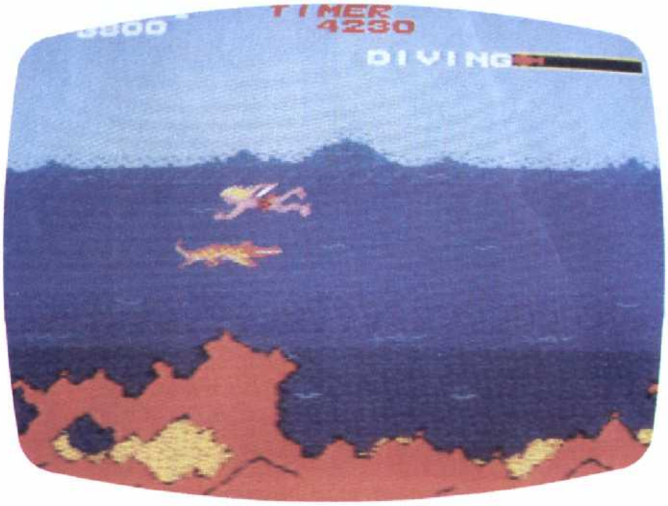
ARCADE ACTION

THIS MONTH'S WINNERS

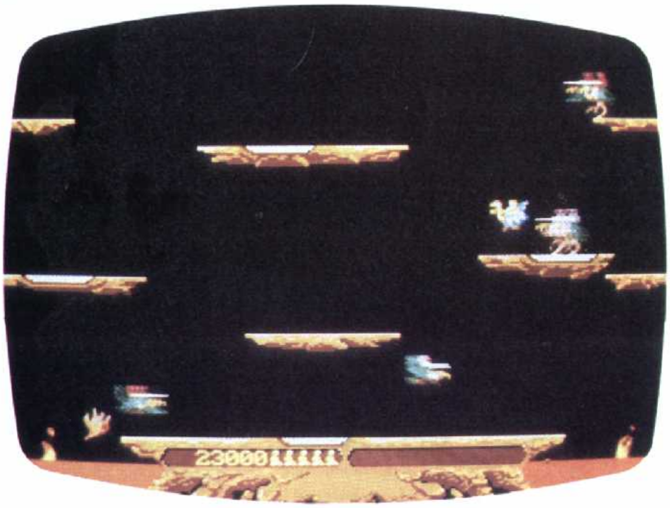
(Arcade Action's winning games, listed in order of popularity, are the 10 most-played games in the country as VIDIOT goes to press.)

BY P. GREGORY SPRINGER

1. **SUPER PAC-MAN**
2. **JOUST**
3. **JUNGLE HUNT**
4. **MOON PATROL**
5. **BURGER TIME**
6. **PENGO**
7. **SATAN'S HOLLOW**
8. **MS. PAC-MAN**
9. **DONKEY KONG**
10. **GALAGA**



JUNGLE HUNT—Who greased that grapevine? Taito's barbarians in the jungle are holding their own against the popularity of this generic jungleman. Because the Edgar Rice Burroughs foundation holds an invincible right to the name of the original jungle lord (i.e. "Tarzan"), Taito had to avoid going to court when Burroughs swooped down on their original game, Jungle King. The video game company responded obligingly, eliminating the unmistakable yodel, changing the things that the hunter swings upon from vines to more civilized ropes, stripping off the loincloth and actually dressing that elephant trained athlete in human clothes! What would Bo Derek think? As for the game itself—which still exists under both names and forms of attire—some of us more uncoordinated types are still trying to get past the swinging stage. One of these days, when we finally learn to be patient, I suppose we'll get the hang of it.



JOUST—This one keeps getting more humane and comradely. There's never been a game (not even Space Duel) that was more fun to share controls with another humble earth being. In addition to enabling players to fight jointly against insidious buzzards and pterodactyls in a mythological Middle Age landscape, some rounds offer the option of splitting the team, every man for himself. The first player to unseat the other from his flapping ostrich wins a bonus 3000 points. Except in competition play, it may be to both players' advantage not to fall for this temptation, since unseating your partner might make it harder for you to finish off all the remaining buzzards on your own. Longevity, even in the dire dark days, required the aid of one's own species. Like I said, flapping can be friendly.

VIDIOT OF THE MONTH

JOHN COUGAR

With two hits in the Top 10 at *the same time*, Mr. Cougar probably made enough money this past year to buy his own video arcade! If nothing else, it would keep him and his boys off the street and out of trouble. Seen here in front of one of his fave rave games, this vidiot offers the philosophy according to Cougar: "Everyone needs a joystick to hold onto" and "Oh, yeah, the game goes on, long after the thrill of playing is gone!" Rock on, Johnny!!

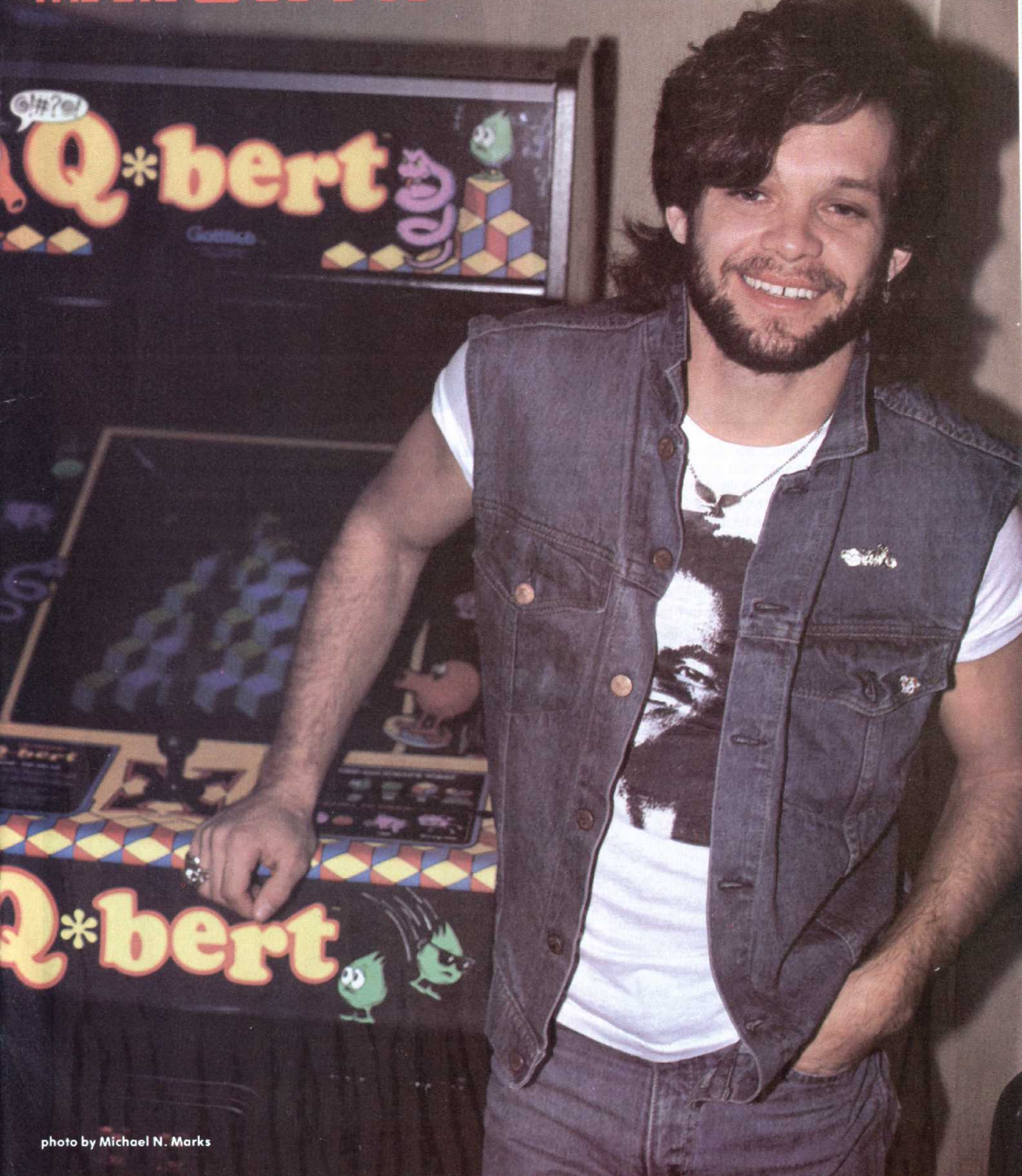
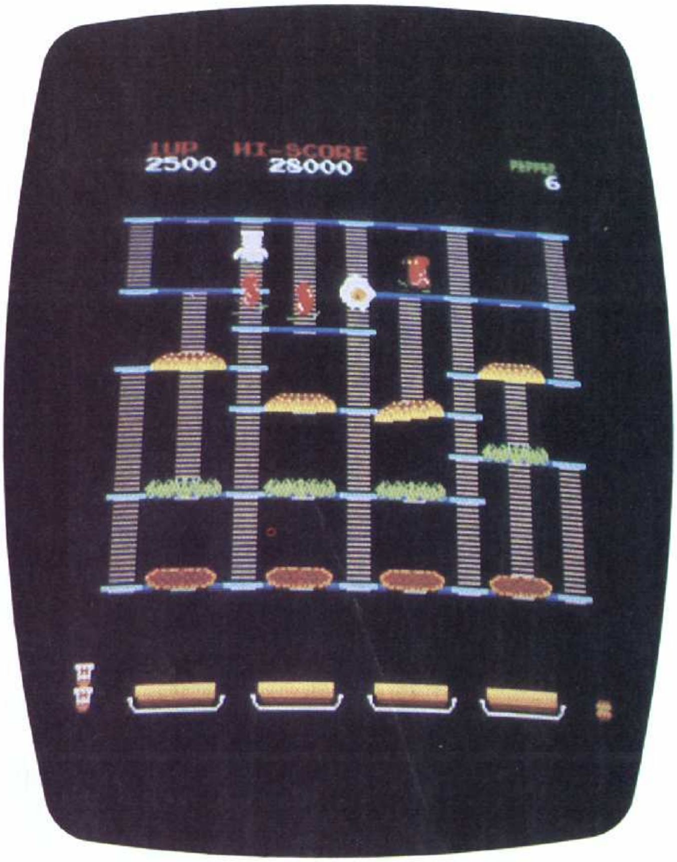
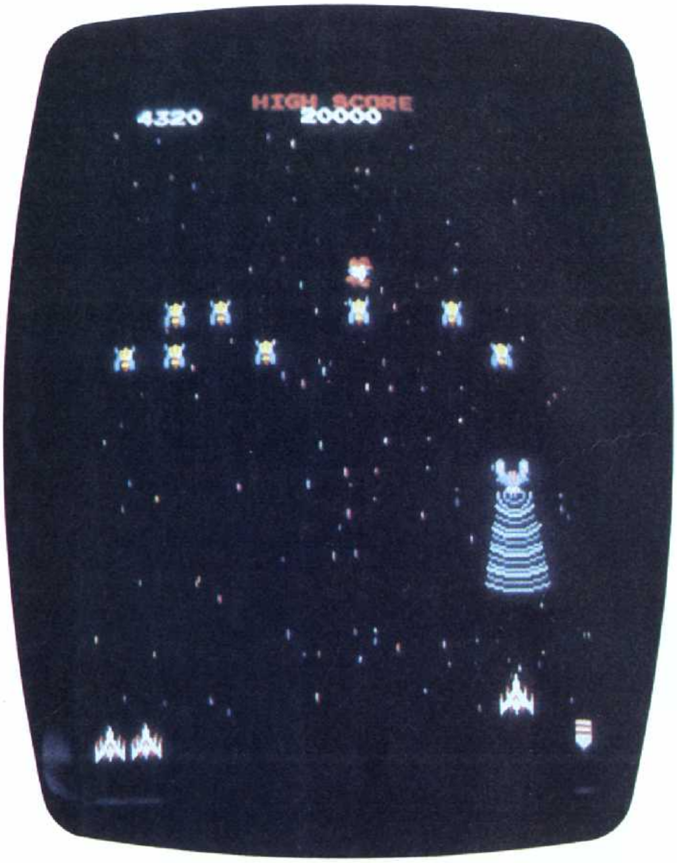


photo by Michael N. Marks



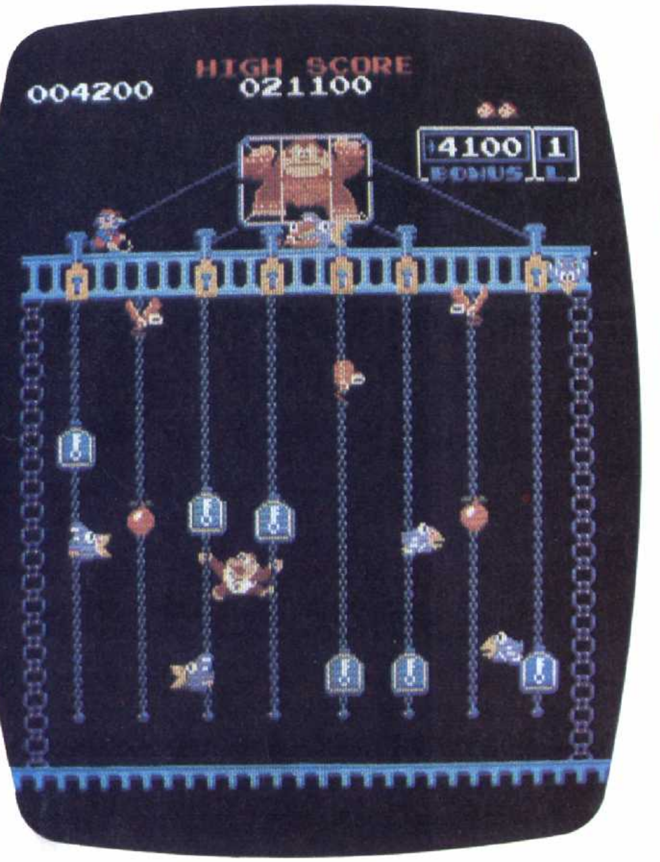
BURGER TIME—Is this a Japanese game? The little chef, Peter Pepper, requires a precise step over his buns, and lettuce, and burgers, or he sticks up the recipe, leaving him at the mercy of Mr. Pickle, Mr. Hot Dog, and Mr. Fried Egg? (Maybe this is a French game). To save him is the handy pepper pot, which when sprinkled on attacking cuisine, renders each dish immobilized for enough time to escape and possibly even crunch them beneath the falling Dagwood monstrosity. Seasoned players, mind you, tend to run only half-way across their fare, then waiting for the indigestion-makers to follow. Finishing out the run, they plummet to their death, and rack up "brownie" points for the baker. For extra peppers, try to catch the coffee, fries and ice cream when it appears in the middle of the menu. Tasty!

MIDWAY
BurgerTime
PETER PEPPER
P



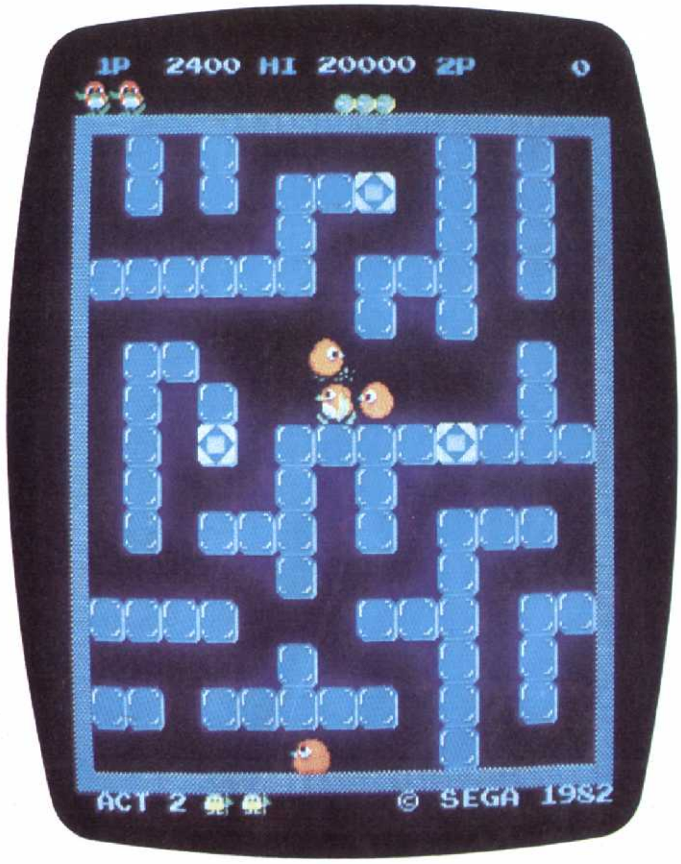
GALAGA—Galaga must be the most creative refinement of the Space Invaders group. The oldest member of the top ten, not much has changed about it since it gained popularity early last year. Assuming a "crouch-and-fire" position has become the requisite posture for advance players, and punching that fire button as quickly as possible (and quicker than that!) is truly the key to the top scores. It didn't take players too long to learn that sitting comfortably in the center during most of the challenging stages was the way to eliminate all 40 swarming insects, a "Perfect Score." Doubling up ships has also become requisite. Despite the learned and passed-on clues to winning, the game remains popular, in part because the music rewards winning with a proud march, noisy and distinguishable and informing everyone else in the arcade that you have earned your stripes on the field.

MIDWAY
Galaga
namco
Bally co.
FIGHTER CAPTURED

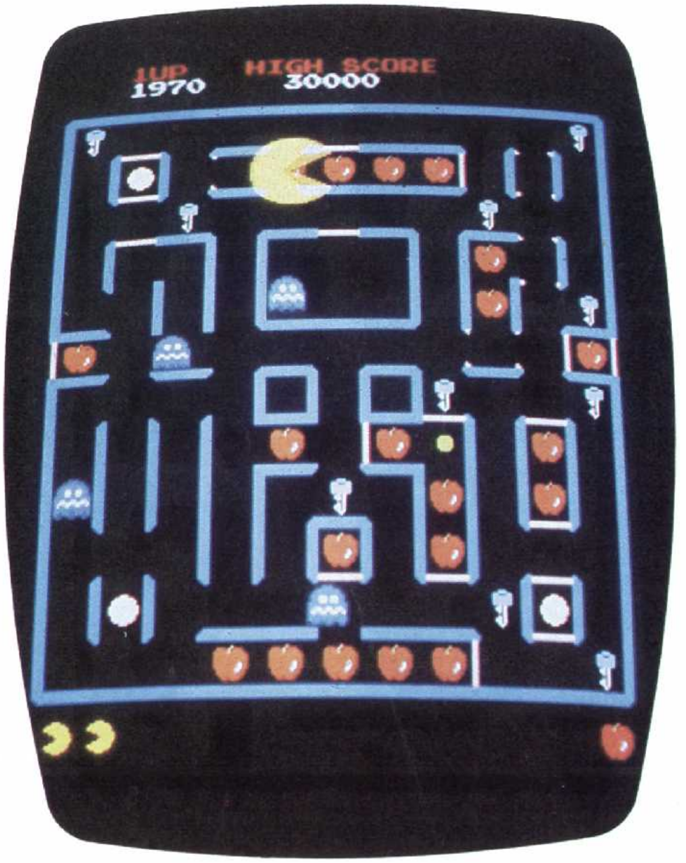

HIGH SCORE
004200
021100
4100
1
BONUS

DONKEY KONG JR.—DKJ goes for the key, working his way to the top in the footsteps of his famous father, DK Sr. It must be a hard role to live up to, especially since Mr. Kong was just this year named "Game of the Year" by *Time* magazine. One almost expects Mario to retaliate. The original game was a romance, the sequel is revenge, and the third? Perhaps a *film noir?* Charlie Kong and the Case of the Missing Key? And just what are those diving piranhas? One must admit, that if cute is your game, little Kong scoots up a vine charmingly. And falls so flat.

Nintendo
DONKEY KONG
JUNIOR
Nintendo
DONKEY KONG
JUNIOR

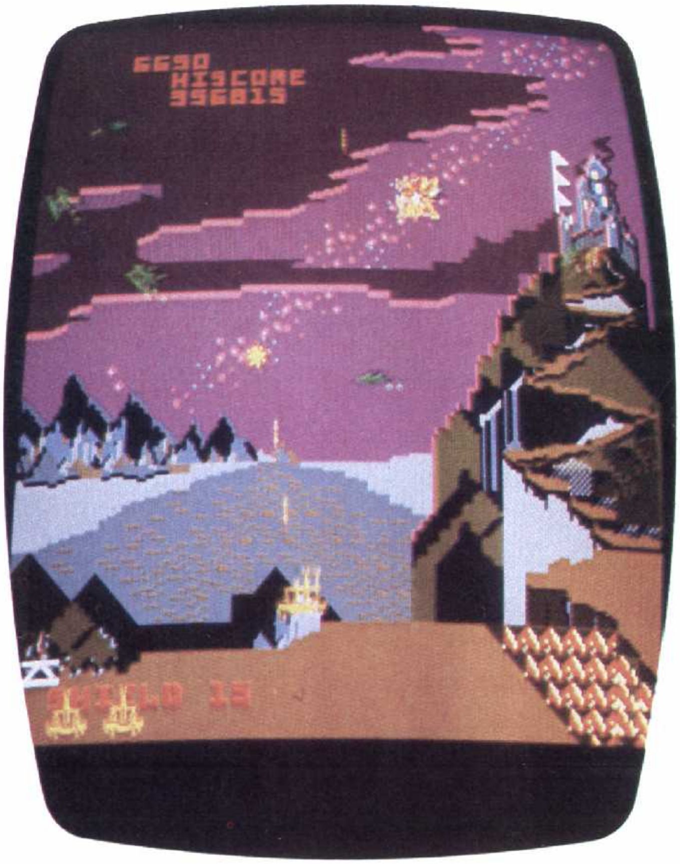

1P 2400 HI 20000 2P 0
ACT 2
© SEGA 1982

PENGO—As expected, the ice skater moved into the ratings this month, bringing his adorable Sno-Bees with him. Nothing is belligerent about Pengo. Even the front of the board shows the little bees delightedly slipping their way on their bottoms, sledding over frozen bricks of ice. There's something unspeakably perverse about Pengo in that respect, as though Betty White or Tiny Tim had a hand in the design. Within its movable, dissolving maze, Pengo retains the brightest and lightest hues this side of Ms. Pac-Man, and moving always at right angles, it might be the most politically relevant game going. Question is, which side is it on? The square isolationist right or the nuclear freezers?



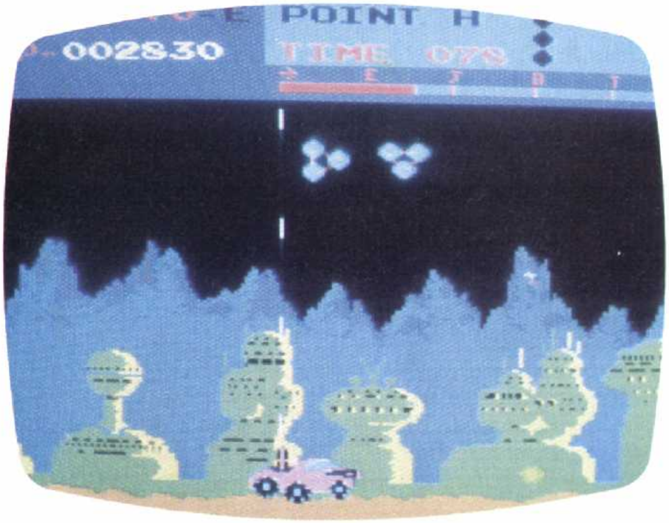
SUPER PAC-MAN—Is this the ultimate Leader of the Pac? The third generation arcade entry in the Pac-Man series offers more athletics, energy, and probably exhaustion than any previous Pac. With the addition of a Super Speed button, the little yellow stomach can scurry in two different gears. Bally has also incorporated locked passageways, added energy dots for both Power and Super-invincibility, and changed the boring little dots into items like hot dogs, old shoes, and fried eggs. There's also a Bonus Stage at regular intervals in which the player can test his speed and skill without being chased by the Inky-Blinky-Etc. Obviously, the way to accrue points is to 1) eat the Super energy dot for invincibility, 2) hit the superspeed button, 3) eat the Power energy dot, and 4) go out and eat those blue ghosts. The problem is that superspeeds also make maze entrances easy to miss. And don't get caught in the dead end of an unopened pathway. Eat those keys!

SUPER
PAC-MAN
Bally MIDWAY
SUPER
SUPER SPEED



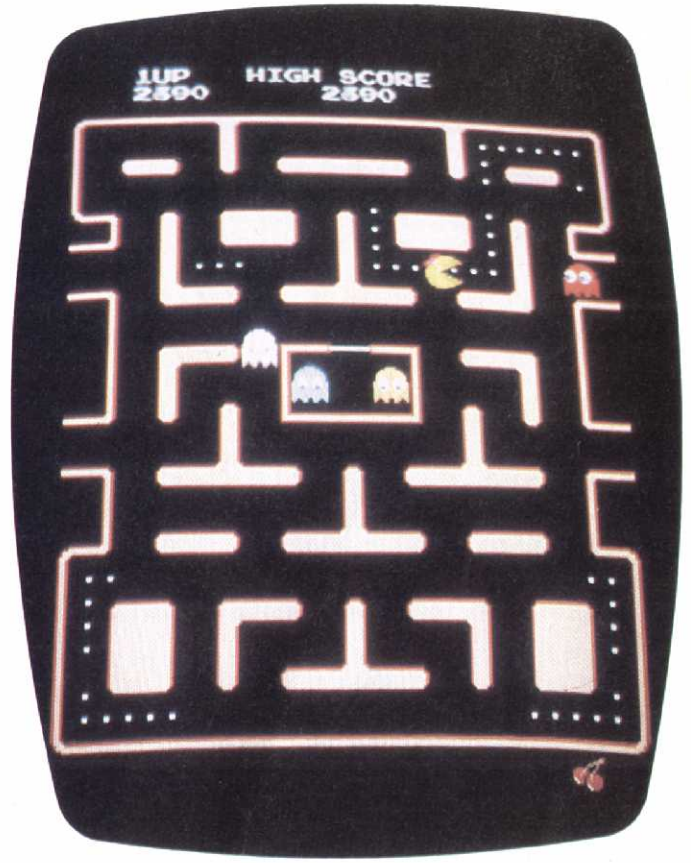
SATAN'S HOLLOW—He certainly is. The copyright date for this Bally game is 1981, so it's taken a while for the Ugly One to breathe fire on his way to the top. Like so many of the linearly immobilized shooting games since Space Invaders on, the player remains on a stationary plane at the bottom of the board, shooting upwards at attacking birds or planes. In Satan's Hollow, the crowing pterodactyls drop MX-missiles (weird combination of militarism and religion here) upon the player as his ship attempts to carry bridge parts across the great abyss (weird anthropomorphism, too). Apparently, the bottomless pit lies below this less-than-peaceful valley, which is introduced by Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" as you render your quarter unto the Malevolent Machine. Satan in all his various guises breathes down blazes upon you, and only a well-timed shot (slightly in advance of His approach) puts out the fire.

SATANS HOLLOW


POINT H
002830
TIME 078
E J D T

MOON PATROL—In the mountains of the moon, through the craters of the lunar casbah, or simply driving on a moonlight mile, Williams' game keeps us trucking on patrol. The samba sound of the music makes this unique game seem invitingly dream-like, less dangerous than the terrors of atmosphereless roving might seem. Moon Patrol gives the impression that you're actually reaching some destination, straight as the UFO flies. Thanks to the "continue play" feature, your quarter deposited within a countdown of seconds will enable you to (gradually, expensively) advance to the higher levels, past lunar points E, J, D, T, and Z. Don't ask what the letters stand for. Geysers, tanks, craters, and landmines interrupt the path of the specially equipped vehicle. Hit one and the screen is splattered with your flying tires.

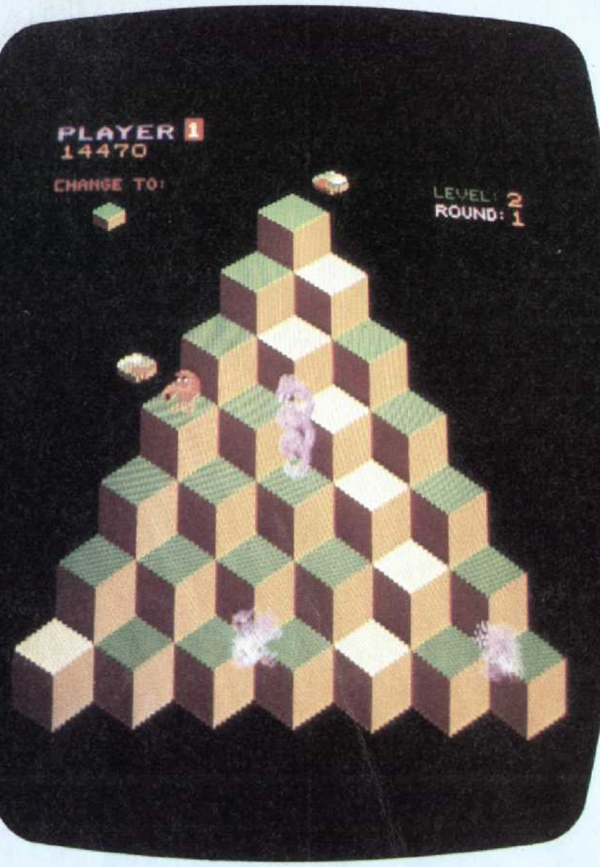
Williams
Moon Patrol
POINT
Moon
Patrol
© 1982
TODAY'S HIGH SCORE
WINS 4 FREE TOKENS
jump
fire
slower
faster
fire
jump
Williams


1UP
2590
HIGH SCORE
2590

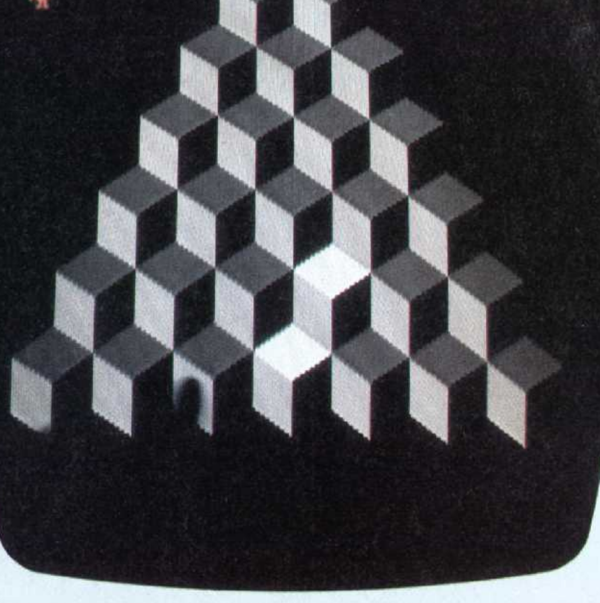
MS. PAC-MAN—Love springs eternal, or at least it seems so. Is the Pastel Queen slipping in the ratings? Are her yellow, pink, and baby blue allures losing their charms? Do floating fruits cease to be tasty? Is her rouged-cheeks sexy pose, as she sits on top of the machine like a bawdy-house dancer, becoming stale? When she falls head over heels at every capture, is she trying to tell us something? All one can do is wait for next issue's *Arcade Action* to see where the girl is going. She may be dying of a broken heart, but in the meantime, players are luring lustful ghosts toward energy dots and letting the nibbler bite back.

MS. PAC-MAN
MS. PAC-MAN

ARCADE ACTION CLOSE-UP



CRAZY FOR Q*BERT'S CUBE



I admit it. I am a Q*Bert burnout. After two days on the suicidal pyramid of cubes, it became impossible to recognize the tops from the bottoms. Once one has flunked the ground/figure psychology test, unable to see the vase instead of the two faces kissing there's no going back. I've had to turn in my joystick, 'cause the world of Q*Bert turned crossed-eyed on me.

Even now as I type on my video screen, I jerk back, expecting little red, purple, and green gobs to fall down upon these words, crunching my cursor with a horrible fender-bending collision.

The name of Q*Bert itself sounds like swearing. From the electronic "clunk" the moment one puts in a quarter, the noises of Q*Bert form an entire linguistic fantasy in imaginative cursing. Even when the game is over, Q*Bert gets the last word, which sounds a little like "bye-bye," or "sci-fi," or "I buried Paul," I'm not sure which. And the player's inevitable groan fits right into the advanced vocabulary. They finally made a game to match the emotions of video futility.

Q*Bert only has one control: a diagonal directional joystick which moves the strange little Q—a globular nerd with long nose and feet—over a pyramid of cubes. He begins at the top for each round, descends with little hops, and moves up and down over the triangle changing the colors of the cubes. If he attempts to jump off the side of the pyramid, he plummets to his death below. When this happens, he cries "OOooooooooooh."

So does the player.

As he jumps along, his eyes bouncing up and down in his head, a constant avalanche of colored gumballs drops from the top, too. (They always land on the second row of cubes, leaving the top spot "safe," a feature which becomes indispensible later on). Red ones clunk Q*Bert. Purple ones turn into Coily, a Brooklyn version of a snake named Curley. Green ones can be pounced upon by the Q, at which time the board freezes and he can spend some worry-free time changing the colors on the board to suit his liking.

From the bottom of the pyramid, Wrong-Way and Ugg defy gravity and bounce weightless toward the upper portion of the pyramid. They, like everything else, get in the way. Also like everything else, they tend to jump off the pyramid to oblivion when they reach the side.

Finally, Sam and Slick—a green beatnik mutant version of Q*Bert—descend down the staircase cubes, also changing colors as they go. Since they tend to appear just when the Q*Bert has already wiped up, their intrusion can be most irritating. Anything green, however, can be stopped in its tracks by Q*Bert. Anything not green, however, kills.

The purpose of Q*Bert is to match every cubetop on the pyramid with the key color noted on the upper right hand corner of the screen. There are nine levels of play, with four rounds in each level, and there are five different patterns on the pyramid.

The first pattern, for level one, can be comprehended even by those of us who wouldn't dream of touching a Rubik's Cube. Every time Q*Bert lands on a cubetop, the color changes to the key color and stays there. Sam and Slick don't even come out to bother us. All Q*Bert has to do is land on every top once, and the round ends.

The second pattern is slightly more complicated. Q*Bert must land on every top twice to achieve the required color.

For the third pattern, Q*Bert gets the correct color the first time he hits each top, but if he lands on it again it switches back to another color.

Fourth time around, each top must be landed on twice for the correct color, but it will switch if hit a third, or fifth, or seventh, etc., time.

Fifth and each level subsequently (are you following this?—because if you think it's hard to explain you should try playing it!), a three-way color cycle operates on the top of every cube. If Q*Bert accidently changes a cube to a non-key color, he must land on it two more times to get the winning combination. This is when things get really frustrating.

The possibility of your eyes inverting the "ins" and the "outs" of the cubes grows as speed and intensity of play increases. On the second level, round four, and other times, a pyramid made up of only tops appears, creating a two-dimensional illusion that provides a temporary respite from the reversal illusion.

Points grow as Q*Bert makes the rounds. Twenty-five are awarded for turning a cubetop to the key color, even if it's for the umpteenth time, so theoretically one could jump around in "circles" on the upper levels and still get points. It is not always advisable to color the board as quickly as possible, however. By the side of every pyramid are a different number of swirling colored disks floating in space. Only Q*Bert can jump on them from the pyramid, causing Coily the Snake to leap to his death and earn 500 points. In the early rounds, the player will want to loiter (out of the way of the falling droplets) until all his disks have lured Coily to inevitable doom. Q*Bert can leap on a disk whenever Coily is within three leaping cubetops of him. If he hesitates, Coily crunches him with the awful smash-up sound, and the swearing begins.

Pick up the green blob whenever you can, even if you are just waiting around for Coily to come at you. He's good for 100 points. But beware of his directions, since sometimes it seems that the heaven above releases this delicious green apple to tempt you to jump into the way of another deadly blob or to overlook the advances of the snake. (No religious symbolism intended. Q*Bert is a very earthy game.)

There are two ways to excel at capturing the green people, Sam and Slick (and the green ball, too). Wait on the top square (inaccessible to all enemies, except the snake). You are safe there. Time your jumps to follow immediately after a ball or character drops, since they seem to leap in fairly regular spacing. When Sam or Slick jump from above, you can catch them before they do too much damage. Same goes for the green ball. Or wait midway on the third layer of cubes (never the second, the most dangerous layer because ALL dropping balls land there), then gauge the jumps of the balls in order to hit green ones and avoid all others.

Don't worry in the early rounds too much about Sam and Slick, as long as you have flying disks to take you back to the top. They usually can be cleaned up afterwards. But try to catch them for the points (300 each).

No points are awarded for purple bottom-side-up creatures Ugg and Wrong-Way. They only get in the way. But sometimes you can jump them, ditto for the falling gravity balls. Usually it pays to look before you leap, and outstep the chaos around you.

One more word about Sam and Slick. In all levels above five, when the three-way color shifting is in effect, it sometimes becomes literally impossible to land on the final cubetop and make the board a winning uniform color. There is only one way to win, in that case. The one cube with a wrong color must be on the dangerous second level, and Q*Bert must wait on the top. With split-second timing, the shrewd Q pounces upon the descending green Guy just as he changes the cube to the intermediate color, thus changing to a winning color and ending the round. It's a trick, but it's the only way to break the circle.

Floating disks left outside the pyramid when the board is completed count for some points in upper levels, 50 or 100. In the first rounds, though, they count for nothing, so it's best to use them to trick Coily.

Finally, the best way to get the board to the color you want is impress the target color in your mind immediately. Don't pay too much attention to the patterns you are creating or try plotting directional strategies. Keep the color you want in mind, and watch an overall of the board to see how things are going. The ability to shift directions, make new pathways instantaneously, is your greatest asset in Q*Bert. Don't get in a directional rut. Watch the board colors alter and take a direct path, watching the entry of creatures with your peripheral vision. Plotting strategies more than two jumps ahead can be disastrous, unless you're one of those people who knows birthdays 50 years in advance. Me, I can hardly remember a seven digit phone number.

One more thing. The rhythm of Q*Bert's jumping sounds are highly mesmerizing, deceptive, generating a pulse that one instinctively wants to regulate, like a heartbeat. You might get further with a syncopation or counterpoint oink oink oink while pouncing over the pyramid. When, in the later rounds, balls are dropping like flies, you have a veritable percussion symphony of oink oink oink. Coily joins in with his squashy sound, and the best Steve Reich can't hold a candle to it. If two Q*Bert machines are set percolating beside one another side by side, players have been known to jump over the edge in confusion. Embarrassing.

Q*Bert is rather mono-paced, and with only one joystick, nothing can be done to speed it up, advance to higher levels faster, or alter the basic step-by-step (or hop-by-hop) motion. With that minor drawback in mind, Q*Bert may not be a game you'll want to play for the rest of your life, but then what is?

Gottlieb has introduced a pinball based on Q*Bert, called "Q*Bert's Quest." Is there an entire cosmology of this guy I've missed out on? Is he a comic book character or a Saturday morning cartoon that's somehow passed me by, like a Garfield or the Smurfs? What is this guy with only feet and nose?

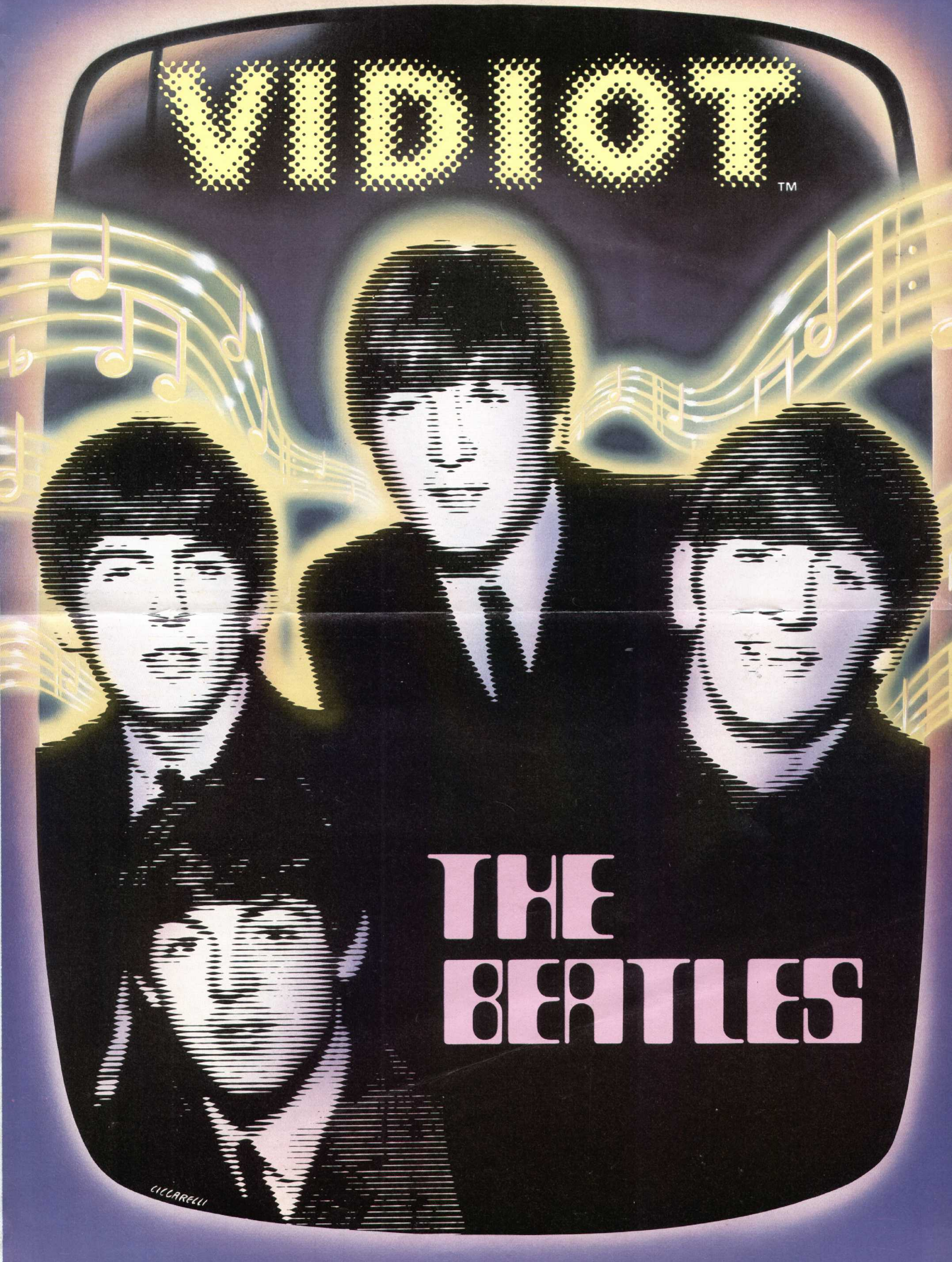
Whatever, even the pinball is infuriating. It has four flippers, two of which operate backwards and with reverse hands (right hand operates left flipper, and v.v.).

What's more, with balls and no hopping video guy, a chunka chunka rhythm has been incorporated into the sounds of pinball Q*Bert, creating that adrenalin inducing rhythm that mades the video game as fun as it is. Who *is* this guy? ■

@!#?@!
Gottlieb
Q*bert

THE MAGAZINE OF VIDEO LUNACY!

VIDIOT™


THE BEATLES
CICCARELLI

I watched the tube today, oh boy!

THE COMPLEAT BEATLES

Ludwig
THE BEATLES

Collage by Chuck Ames for Capitol Records

BY BILL HOLDSHIP

As a rock 'n' roll fanatic, I originally bought a video recorder hoping to collect a lot of vintage rock footage. Although I've enjoyed recording everything from *The TAMI Show* to *Monterey Pop* to *Rock 'N' Roll High School* for posterity's sake, my main ambition has been to obtain classic clips of Elvis Presley, especially from the '50s (which is another column) and, of course, the Beatles from every phase of their career.

I've always been a bit of a Beatlemaniac—not one of those nuts who pays $100 for the Kleenex Ringo once sneezed in or anything like that (I don't even plan to buy the recently issued master copies LP collection)—but, like many people, their music and image/philosophy meant a lot to me when I was growing up in the '60s. As Bruce Springsteen once remarked when claiming he knew nothing about "art" until rock 'n' roll entered his life, the Beatles "opened doors," and this was especially true if you happened to be growing up in a small town where the main cultural activity consisted of hanging out and smoking cigarettes in front of the Dairy Queen. John Lennon was one of the few childhood "heroes" I held onto as an adult, and, despite a lot of the critical hogwash that's been thrown their way the last several years, I still think the Beatles were the greatest pop band of all time.

The Beatles were the most photographed, filmed and chronicled pop stars of their time—a true product of an electronic mass media, something which didn't exist during biblical times and probably explains why they may well have been "more popular than Jesus" in 1966. The group's history has been documented so many times that one more word on the subject would probably be the epitome of redundancy. Yet, despite this wealth of material, it was still difficult to obtain much video footage of the band during the last decade, with the exception of their feature films (regularly aired on TV throughout the '70s) and brief segments from television specials like Malcolm Leo and Andrew Solt's excellent *Heroes Of Rock 'N' Roll*. Tragically, it was John Lennon's death which provided the opportunity to gain a lot of "new" footage from the major news networks, and let's face it—no matter how hard one tried to filter out the references to Mark David Chapman and murder, those clips will forever provide tainted memories.

The Beatles were a true product of an electronic mass media, something which didn't exist during biblical times and probably explains why they may well have been "more popular than Jesus" in 1966.

It was for this reason that I eagerly awaited the release of MGM/UA's new home video, *The Compleat Beatles*. Pre-release hype promised the definitive Beatles documentary, featuring two hours of history, music and "rare" film clips. Well, the claims were both true and false, depending on how you look at it, and I'm still ambivalent about the final production. *The Compleat Beatles* is definitely a disappointment, at best an extremely flawed "rockumentary."

Narrated by sober "fellow Liverpudlian" Malcolm McDowell, David Silver's script is ultra-serious ("The Beatles were the poets of a generation and heroes of an era...They expressed and reflected the spirit of their time"), albeit historically accurate, and the main point of interest for Beatle fans will be the bits of trivia the film offers (i.e., the original title for *Help!* was *Eight Arms To Hold You*; the boys thought their success would be fleeting, and George hoped to make enough money to start a business when they "finally flopped," while Ringo wanted to be a hairdresser, etc.), making it worth at least one viewing.

The only existing film of the band's early gigs at Liverpool's Cavern club is included in *The Compleat Beatles*.

The first half hour is probably the highlight of the production, and it's intriguing to see clips of, among other things, Liverpool in the mid-'50s, the Beatles' early rock influences like Chuck Berry, Elvis, Eddie Cochran, Little Richard, etc. (even though most of these shots have been seen in numerous other documentaries), Lonnie Donnegan and the British skiffle craze, Cliff Richard singing "Living Doll" to a roomful of girls doing the "hand jive" (!), Tony Sheridan onstage in the early '60s, and the sex clubs in Hamburg, Germany.

Unfortunately (and this is where the video runs into trouble), there are no films of the Fab Four from this early in their career, and the production relies instead on still photographs that are already available in most Beatle books. In fact, I'd estimate that over half of the show features still photographs—this even includes the segments on *Help!*, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Let It Be*—and you might as well look at a book for the same effect. And when the film stoops to just showing photos from the Beatles' album covers (a *Revolver* cover spinning to the strains of "Tomorrow Never Knows" for a "psychedelic" effect is especially obnoxious), it's pretty poor. Apparently the producers were unable to secure a lot of important clips. This is especially evident when Ed Sullivan is shown introducing the band prior to their first appearance on his show. We see Sullivan announcing that the band will be featured "two times tonight—and here they are, the Beatles!" The scene immediately switches to the hysterical audience, as the studio version of "All My Loving" plays in the background, and we're never shown so much as a glimpse of the performance. Talk about an anti-climax!

Apparently to compensate for this lack of footage, a major portion of *The Compleat Beatles* is devoted to present-day interviews with people "close to the Beatles," but it seems at times as though the producers went out of their way to find anyone remotely connected to the Fab Four. (Marianne Faithfull? Bruce "I Write The Songs" Johnston?!?). These interviews include fellow Liverpudlian "pop stars" Gerry Marsden (of Gerry & the Pacemakers) and Billy J. Kramer (well, I suppose they're better than nothing); Alan Williams (their first manager); singer Tony Sheridan; Bill Harry (editor of Liverpool's *Mersey Beat* fanzine); Horst Fasher (manager of the Star Club in Hamburg); Bob Wooler (deejay at the Cavern Club); musicologists Milton Okun and Wilfred Meller; Billy Preston, and rock critics Nicholas Schaffner and Lenny Kaye. While I realize that the latter two may be experts on Beatle history, they provide no new insights on the subject other than the rehashing of rock critic cliches. Too much time is devoted to showing how each person was related to the band with photos of the subject and the Beatles together, and even someone like Billy Preston is given more importance than he probably deserves in the grand scheme of things.

The most interview time is given to producer George Martin. In fact, the video could easily have been titled *The Compleat Beatles Featuring George Martin*, that's how much time he gets. Thankfully, though, Martin is the video's most interesting subject, and technicians will be extremely interested in hearing how the classics (everything from the first session to *Sgt. Pepper's* to *Abbey Road*) were recorded. Martin also provides an abundance of trivia information, such as it was originally his idea to can Pete Best, at least for recording purposes ("He couldn't play drums very well. Couldn't keep a beat very well."). But it should be noted that there is nothing here that can't be found in Martin's recent autobiography, *All You Need Is Ears*, and this points to another major flaw in *The Compleat Beatles*. Video is a visual medium and, as such, the viewer wants to see interesting things. Unless it's a dramatization, history is generally more effective in a book than in a documentary, especially if most of the production consists of faces giving interviews. This make for rather boring viewing, and something you probably won't want to watch more than once or twice. Martin states: "It wasn't their music that sold them to me. It was their charm. They were very charming people." Sadly, despite his claim, there is very little in *The Compleat Beatles* to illustrate how charming they really were.

As far as actual footage of the band is concerned, there's both good and bad. The clip of the Beatles performing "Some Other Guy" (probably the only existing film from the Cavern Club) will be interesting to those who've never seen it, but the clip *has* been shown numerous times on everything from ABC's *20/20* to

The band performs "I Should Have Known Better" during the first scenes.

Ringo looks bewildered during the shooting of *A Hard Day's Night*.

George Martin rehearses the boys during an early recording session.

screen photos by Larry Kaplan

A highlight of *The Compleat Beatles* is actual footage of the Fab Four in the recording studio.

Heroes Of Rock 'N' Roll. In *The Compleat Beatles*, it's shown not once, but three times. There's "Twist & Shout" from the '62 Royal Variety Performance at London's Palladium and the promo video of the boys in *Sgt. Pepper* gear for "Hello, Goodbye," both seen in *Heroes Of Rock*, as well as an early, unpolished video of "She Loves You," which is frequently shown on Casey Kasem's *American Top 40*. The producers scored a real coup by including the very rarely seen promo videos for "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Penny Lane" (shown once on ABC's *Hollywood Palace* in early '67), and then they ruin it by interrupting the footage with George Martin discussing the songs—which makes it almost useless to collectors in the end.

Most of the press conference and interview clips, especially one of John and George immediately following Brian Epstein's death, are excellent, as are the shots of Beatlemania, footage of the band arriving in various countries during their world tour, examples of why touring became a hassle (clips of the band being "escorted" out of a hostile Minneapolis motel), films of the band in the studio, shots with the Maharishi in India, and the band performing "All You Need Is Love" with a celebrity chorus featuring Mick Jagger and Donovan for a '67 television special. Best of all are performances of "I Want To Hold Your Hand" and "From Me To You" at the Washington Coliseum in '64, and "Yesterday," "Nowhere Man" and "If I Needed Someone" at Tokyo's Budo Kan Hall in '66. It's fascinating to once again watch and hear how good the band sounded live—with no monitors and all that screaming (!)—and this is the type of stuff I could watch all night long. Although I'd never seen the Japan concert before, it still reminded me of a past so much a part of my life that the clips were like photographs from an old family album or high school yearbook—and I think that's what most Beatle collectors are looking for. Unfortunately, there's far too little of this in *The Compleat Beatles*. As far as I'm concerned, for a Beatles documentary to be "definitive," it would have to be a lot like *The Kids Are Alright* or the also flawed but still superior *This Is Elvis*. As a documentary, *The Compleat Beatles* is reminiscent of a fair to good TV special, and I've actually received more enjoyment from the recent videos of George Harrison's "All Those Years Ago," the Beatles' own "Love Me Do" (both seen on MTV), and even some of the amateur Beatle "histories" that used to regularly tour the university circuit during the '70s.

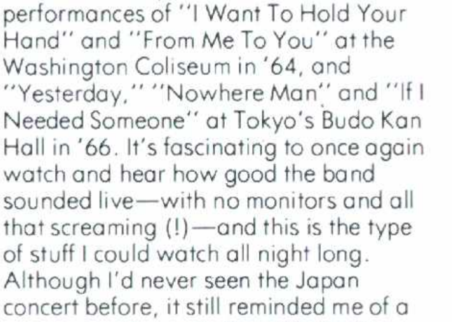
"It wasn't their music that sold them to me. It was their charm. They were very charming people."
—George Martin

To be fair, I know several Beatle fans who think *The Compleat Beatles* is the greatest, and I showed the video to several members of my band who were fascinated by some of the trivia revealed. I've decided to hang on to the video because a few clips are worth having, and because it may be worth showing someday if I ever have kids who want to know what the big fuss was all about. On the other hand, I may just give them several books—Hunter Davies' biography, Philip Norman's *Shout* and, yes, even the best articles from Delilah's *The Compleat Beatles* on which the video is loosely based—because the production fails in one other major sense. Perhaps it's because we see the group in a different perspective now that we've had many years to view them as individuals as opposed to *Beatles*, perhaps it has something to do with the disillusionments time has brought, but the video fails to illustrate *why* the Beatles were so important and influential to an entire generation. Lester Bangs once wrote: "If the Beatles were greater than Jesus Christ, what does that make Farrah Fawcett-Majors?"—and *The Compleat Beatles* really doesn't show why the band was any more important than Van Halen, E.T., Darth Vader or videogames. Because they were, you know.

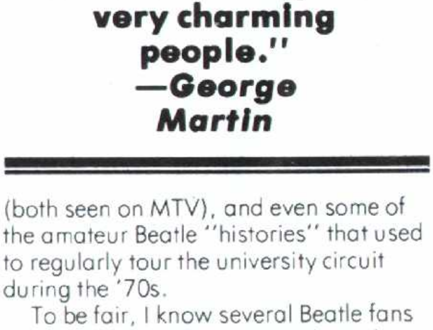
Better yet, I'll probably just give my kids the old records because only the music can slightly recreate what it was like to be alive during the greatest era of popular music the world has ever known—a glorious era when a group of musicians actually made us believe the fairy tale notion that love could save us all.

But we were so much younger then, we're older than that now.

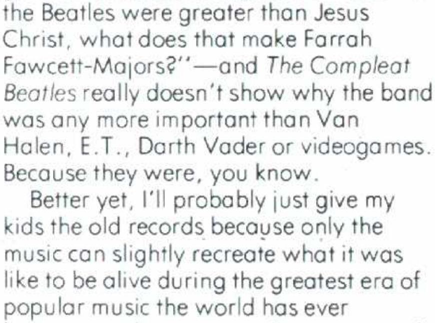
The Beatles debuted "Hey Jude" on *The David Frost Show* in '68.



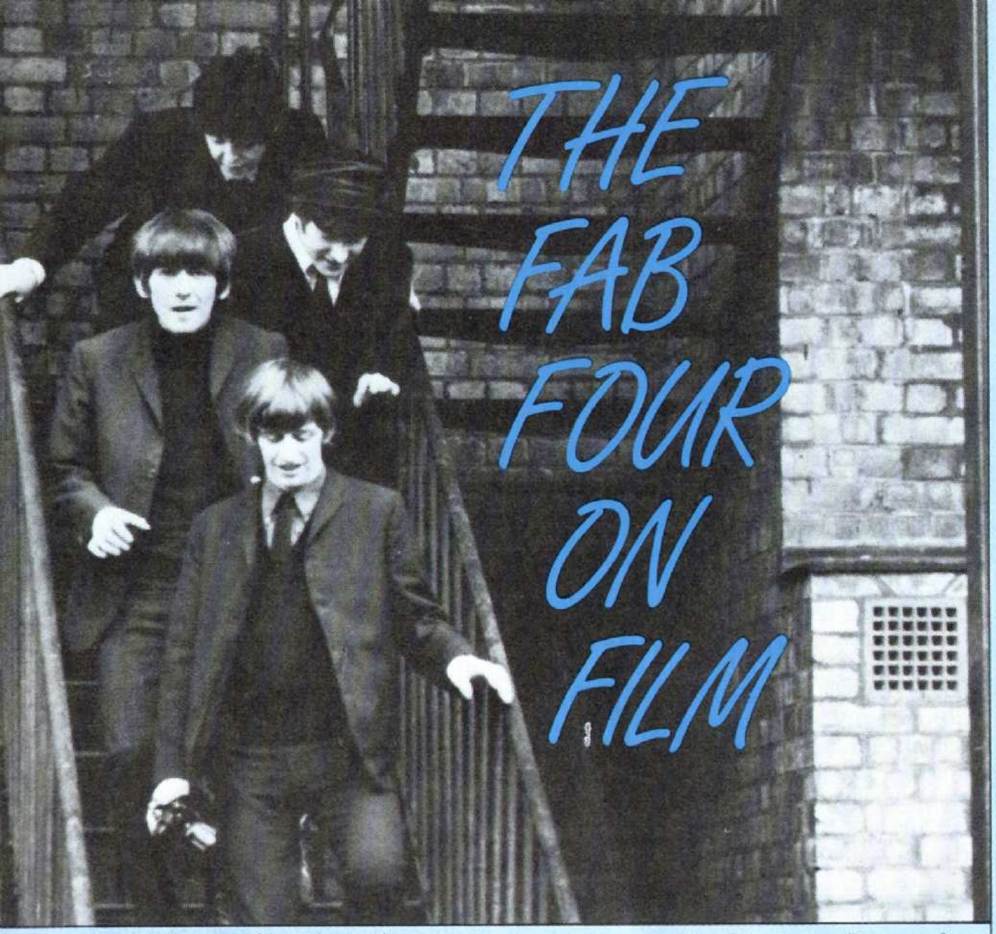
The newsreel footage is a high point of the video.



A true archetypical pop image from the early 1960s.



THE FAB FOUR ON FILM



Richard Lester's *A Hard Day's Night* was the pioneer film that showed a rock movie could incorporate a lot more than beaches and bikinis. A work of celluloid art.

Listed below are films that either feature the Beatles or are related in some way to the band. (Ringo's feature films, everything from *Candy* to *Caveman*, have been excluded for space reasons.) Not all are commercially available as videocassettes, only those indicated—the others can be found on television or as bootlegs. Hopefully, they'll all eventually be easy to obtain.

A Hard Day's Night: If you haven't seen this one, you're obviously not at all interested in the Beatles. Directed by the great Richard Lester with an Oscar-nominated screenplay by Alun Owen, it's the best of their feature films, humorously and insightfully capturing the magic of the band at the height of Beatlemania. It was often shown on TV prior to Lennon's death, but was theatrically re-released last summer with an additional song ("I'll Cry Instead") over a montage of photos. It's only a matter of time before you'll be able to pick it up at your nearest video store. A rock film classic.

Help!: Richard Lester was back for their second film, but this one was zanier, more absurd and (thus) less realistic than their debut. Still, it's a lot of fun, as the Beatles are pursued by an Eastern religious cult after Ringo recieves a "sacred sacrificial ring." And the music is great. Watch for it on the tube.

The Beatles At Shea Stadium (Video Yesteryear): The historic '65 New York concert was filmed for television, and telecast on ABC January 10, 1967. It features the band backstage, the opening acts (the Discoteque Dancers & Band, the King Curtis Revue, Brenda Holloway and Sounds Incorporated), as well as the Beatles' entire performance. Video quality is questionable, but the performance is just fine.

Magical Mystery Tour (Media Video): A BBC television special filmed in '67. Mainly McCartney's brainchild, it shows that everything the Beatles touched didn't turn to gold. Terribly disjointed and pretty boring. Skip it and listen to the record instead.

Yellow Submarine: This one can also be found on television. An elaborate animated film which portrays the Fab Four saving Pepperland from an invasion of the Blue Meanies. The surreal quality effectively captures the myth of the Beatles during their "psychedelic" phase, as well as their individual personalities, and it's a treat for kids and adults alike. Erich Segal of *Love Story* fame collaborated on the script, but don't hold that against it. The real Beatles make a hilarious cameo appearance at the film's conclusion.

Let It Be (Magnetic Video): A documentary of Beatle recording sessions shortly before the break-up. The tension is visible throughout which makes it a sad, depressing chronicle. Still, it's an important film if only for the insight it provides, and the final scene—featuring the Beatles performing an inpromptu concert on the roof of the Apple building—is a classic. It was their final performance together.

One To One Concert (also titled *John & Yoko Concert*): John & Yoko headlined this benefit concert for UNICEF at Madison Square Garden on August 30, 1972. The Lennons were backed by Elephant's Memory, and other performers included Stevie Wonder, Roberta Flack and Sha Na Na. Selections included songs from *Sometime In New York City*, as well as "It's So Hard," "Well, Well, Well," "Instant Karma," "Mother," "Come Together," "Imagine," "Cold Turkey," "Give Peace A Chance" and a great version of "Hound Dog" during which John screams: "I love you, Elvis!" It was telecast on December 15, 1972, and is available from most bootleg outlets. Definitely worthwhile.

John Lennon—Interview With A Legend (Carl Video): An interview by Tom Snyder for his *Tomorrow* show, it was originally telecast on April 28, 1975, and repeated the night after Lennon's death. It was his last in-depth interview prior to his five year "retirement." Snyder is at his most obnoxious and often comes off as a nitwit, but Lennon handles

Some critics compared the Beatles' performances in *Help!* to a Marx Brothers classic.

The still photos from the boys' *Magical Mystery Tour* are generally more fun and interesting than the film itself.

him with humor (it even made me laugh on Dec. 9, 1980—no easy feat) rather than flippancy. Subjects discussed include rock 'n' roll, the Beatles, groupies, drugs, Yoko, the "publicity" for peace, individual members of the Beatles, and John's pending deportation case. Humorous, honest and compassionate, it displays the most human side of Lennon you'll find anywhere, and illustrates why he meant so much to so many. A must for his fans.

Rockshow (EMI Thorn): A film of McCartney & Wings in concert from their '75-'76 world tour; the same show can be heard on the *Wings Over America* LP. In addition to Wings' standards, Paul also performs "Lady Madonna," "The Long And Winding Road," "I've Just Seen A Face," "Blackbird" and "Yesterday." For Wings fans only.

Rock For Kampuchea: A 1979 benefit concert for Cambodian famine organized by McCartney and UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim. Wings perform, as do the Who, Queen, the Pretenders, Elvis Costello, Rockpile, Robert Plant, the Clash, Ian Dury and the Specials. The grand finale is a nice version of "Let It Be" performed by Rockestra—a conglomeration of rock superstars. Definitely has its exciting moments. This is currently making the rounds on pay cable stations, so it should be in the stores soon.

Concert For Bangladesh: George Harrison's superstar extravaganza at Madison Square Garden in 1971 to benefit the starving nation. Harrison performs "Here Comes The Sun," "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" and "Something." Other performers include Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, Ringo Starr, Billy Preston, Leon Russell and Ravi Shankar. Hasn't been seen much lately, perhaps due to the legal hassles created by Allen Klein.

Birth Of The Beatles: Dick Clark produced this made-for-TV biopic which traces the early days of the band up to their first Ed Sullivan appearance, and the result ain't bad. It's not totally accurate historically (i.e., Stu Sutcliffe died the day before the Beatles returned to Hamburg), but it's a good dramatization nonetheless. Stephen MacKenna is exceptional as Lennon. The film is overly-sympathetic to Pete Best, which is understandable since he's credited as "technical advisor." The music is "recreated" by Rain.

I Wanna Hold Your Hand: Stephen Spielberg was the executive producer of this much-overlooked "fantasy" film which was sort of *American Graffiti* meets Beatlemania. Five New Jersey teens travel to New York in '64, hoping to see the Beatles' debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. It accurately recreates the mania of the time, and even throws in a bit of socio-cultural material by showing how the kids' lives are changed by the event. (The haircut scene is a gem!) The Beatles are seen in newsclips, and the soundtrack is continuous Beatle music. Great performances by a fine cast, many of whom would later turn up in Spielberg's *1941*. A fun, fun, film. Catch it on the 4:30 movie!

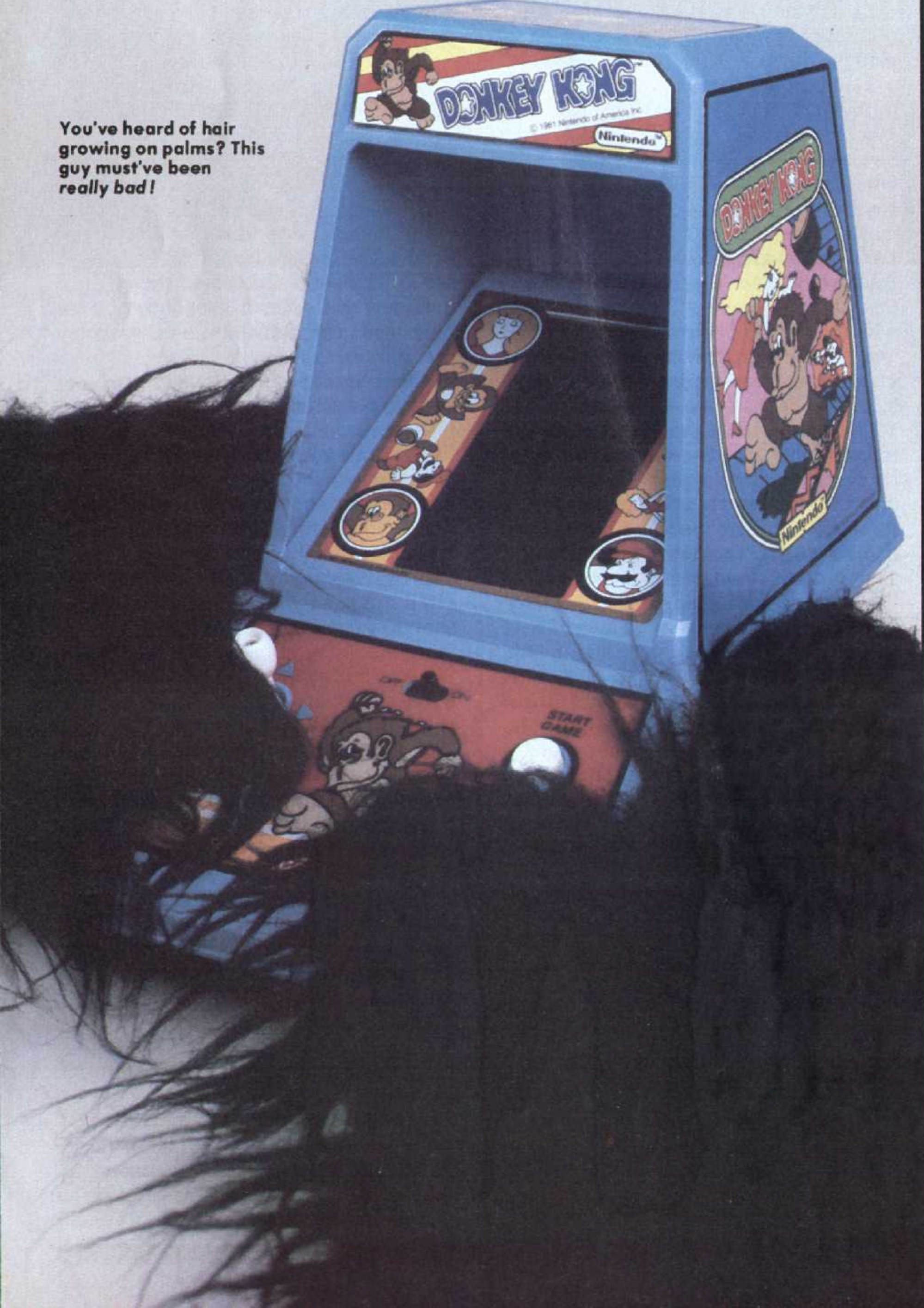
Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (MCA/Universal): Robert Stigwood's biggest travesty, and that's saying a lot. If you really want this one, you probably deserve it. You'll probably want to own the dreadful film version of *Beatlemania* ('81) as well. It upsets me to no extent that we continue to get atrocious Beatle theatrical productions in this country, yet Willy Russell's extraordinary, award-winning *John, Paul, George, Ringo and Bert* has never been seen in America. I saw it four times in London the summer of '75, and it's unquestionably the best dramatization of the Beatles' career ever produced. McCartney (who's portrayed rather unflatteringly) refused to let Stigwood have the film rights for this one, so that probably explains it.

Other Beatle films available from bootleg outlets on compilation tapes include: *Around The Beatles* (a '64 British TV special); *What's Happening* (a documentary showing the band's activities during their first trip to New York); *The Beatles Come To Town* (a '63 concert in Manchester, England); *The Beatles' Washington Coliseum Concert* (10 songs from '64—two of which are shown in *The Compleat Beatles*, featuring an incredible version of "This Boy"); *The Beatles' Tokyo Concert* (the entire concert—11 songs—from '66 in color, excerpts are also included in *The Compleat Beatles*); *The Beatles' Hollywood Bowl Concert* (their '64 Hollywood performance); *The Beatles On David Frost* (a '68 interview and performance of "Hey Jude") and *Imagine* (a '72 John & Yoko "art" film, featuring all the tracks from the *Imagine* LP). Promotional videos (for the Beatles as a *group* only) are available of "Strawberry Fields," "Penny Lane," "Hey Jude," "Rain," "Revolution," "Good Day Sunshine," "Back In The U.S.S.R." and "The Ballad Of John & Yoko." Also available are tons of newsreels, assorted TV appearances (i.e., *Ed Sullivan*), film trailers, Lennon's role in *How I Won The War*, McCartney's '73 TV special *James Paul McCartney* and probably numerous items yet to be uncovered. ■

You won't find the historic Shea Stadium performance on *The Compleat Beatles*, but the public domain film is available commercially on videocassette.

COLECO STANDS ALONE

(NO KIDDING)



You've heard of hair growing on palms? This guy must've been *really bad!*

BY RICK JOHNSON

Take it from me—coming up with feature ideas about videogames is Desperation City. After all, each one of them is basically a variation of the three "classic" games, Pac-Man, Space Invaders and Logging Blimp. Once you get past that, it's mainly pretty colors and quaint names. Take a look at some recent features: "*Official Guide To Games With Space As the First Word In Name,*" "*These Are The Carts For Left Handed, Tuesday-Stunned Players Of Southern European Extraction,*" "*Everything You've Ever Wanted To Know About Videogames That Are Best Played In the Back Seat of a Lime Green Gremlin Traveling In Reverse To a Destination Just West of Low-Sodium Gomorrah*" and VIDIOT's infamous Dr. Omar Von Elmo and his grim exposé on "*Arcade Injuries.*" Ya! You bet!

The way the manufacturers are cranking out new product, you'd think they were pushing cheapo TV albums. You know, the kind where the guy hollers, "Call right this very second! Operators are standing by!" Can't you just picture a big room full of bored operators, standing "by"?

Then there are the very logical looking print ads that try to ram your shantyboat with technical blah like "Pete, you did a bang-up job, I'm putting you in charge of Pittsburgh, I know it's perfect, Peter, that's why I picked Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh's perfect, Peter. May I call you Pete?"

No matter which way you slice the bitter weenie, they've got something they want you to want. They need you to need, etc. But hey—it's one thing to sell you a cartridge that'll more or less present the game with decent graphics, sound and action. The ol' arcade experience pitch.

What's an arcade experience? Depends on how creative (or dirty!) your mind is, I suppose. This here being a mom, dads and grannies rag, we'll pass on the leather arcades for now.

What the boys with the big pens want to convince us is that we can reasonably expect graphics, play action and ability to cut through a tin can and still slice a tomato vaguely reminiscent of the coin-op mammoths. I'm sure you needed that explanation about as much as you need a case of trick confetti. We're dealing with *desperation*, you'll remember. Like the old saying goes, when life hands you a lemon, start a record company, right?

The big, big biggie is this: considering the quality of most cartridges, how in the world could anyone think that stand-alone models are even worth the price of a new elastic Slinky?

Seriously—these ridiculous little

photos by Larry Kaplan

preemie jukes rack up an apparent-usage score just slightly higher than the lie detector test James Arness gave the giant grasshopper in *Beginning of the End*. They stand less than a foot tall (my *actual* foot), the screens are about the size of Gates Brown's brain and the controls were apparently designed with quadroplegic tree sloths in mind.

Worse yet, most of them play these rotten peep-a-diddle songs before and after every single match. It's getting to the point where I'd rather consumer test smoke alarms, scuba batons and can openers than sit through another teedle-deedle rink-ditty.

These tiny tussles don't come cheap, either. Who does? You can expect to pay in the neighborhood of $59.95 for the better units. That's big bucks for the bing-bing, wacka wacka and a joystick resembling an ice-cold manhood ornament.

The cost factor brings up an "interesting" question. Are they meant for kids or adults? Or both? Or neither? Or dogs? They certainly *look* like they're made with little hands and intellects in mind. Fool the leetle dummies with a couple wrongo-perspective television commercials and they'll think it's the real thing, kids being notorious for their faulty banana-to-packing-crate ratio. What the heck, sit 'em down inside a bottle and tell 'em it's a can!

Adults aren't quite that gullible, except politically. *Wait just a secondo*, I thought, upon first viewing the Coleco blurb where the arcade Pac-Man machine is magically transformed into an itty-bitty one so the guy's wife can trick him into coming home and assembling her new decorative herb chart. Iz dis for real?

Au contraire, Pierre! Maybe Timex can make technology "beautiful," but no way is this glorified alarm clock gonna substitute for the Real Thing. Hellfire and shee-it, I'd rather play pick-up sticks during my AM bed bath.

Imagine my surprise when I found out I LOVE THESE GAMES! Just looking at 'em is no fair—you gotta *play* the muthuhs to properly appreciate 'em! So much for the free milk argument, Abby.

It just *took us awhile* here at the great multi-national financial conglomerate we humbly refer to as VIDIOT to actually sit down and try out some stand-alone jobbies. The problem was that we had to *borrow* them from a real-life little kid. Honest injun! And he almost didn't let us have the ones we wanted! He's a *kid*, after all. He's got priorities. As for us—we're just puttin' out a national magazine. Big deal!

When, after numerous requests and vicious threats like firing his pacifier mechanic, we finally got our mitts on 'em, guess what happened? Yup, the entire staff crammed into the trashy corner where VIDIOT is slapped together to play these games to death. The broom tuner, the dog breeder whose mutt thinks the *guy* is a can of Kal-Can and even songbird Charlene, who we had in the closet hanging by her toes over a blowtorch, stopped all "work" and engaged in brutal combat to see who could splat dem spacers and hop them froggies.

You couldn't hardly ask for a better testimonial. If the they-say-childlike-we-say-infantile characters around *here* can deal with these rapturous *rencontrés*, just think what you, the now-informed consumer can do?

After much debate and general hoo-haw (yes, hoo-haw), we decided to stick with Coleco's stand-alones this time because a) they're the best and b) the others aren't. We're scientists here, understand? We play these games in lab

Bernice! The man from Rent-An-Alien is here!

© MIDWAY
Galaxian
CONTROL
PLAYER 1
GAME SELECT
FIRE
OFF
1 PLAYER
2 PLAYER
CONTROL
PLAYER 2
GAME SELECT
FIRE
COLECO
© MIDWAY

I LOVE THESE GAMES!

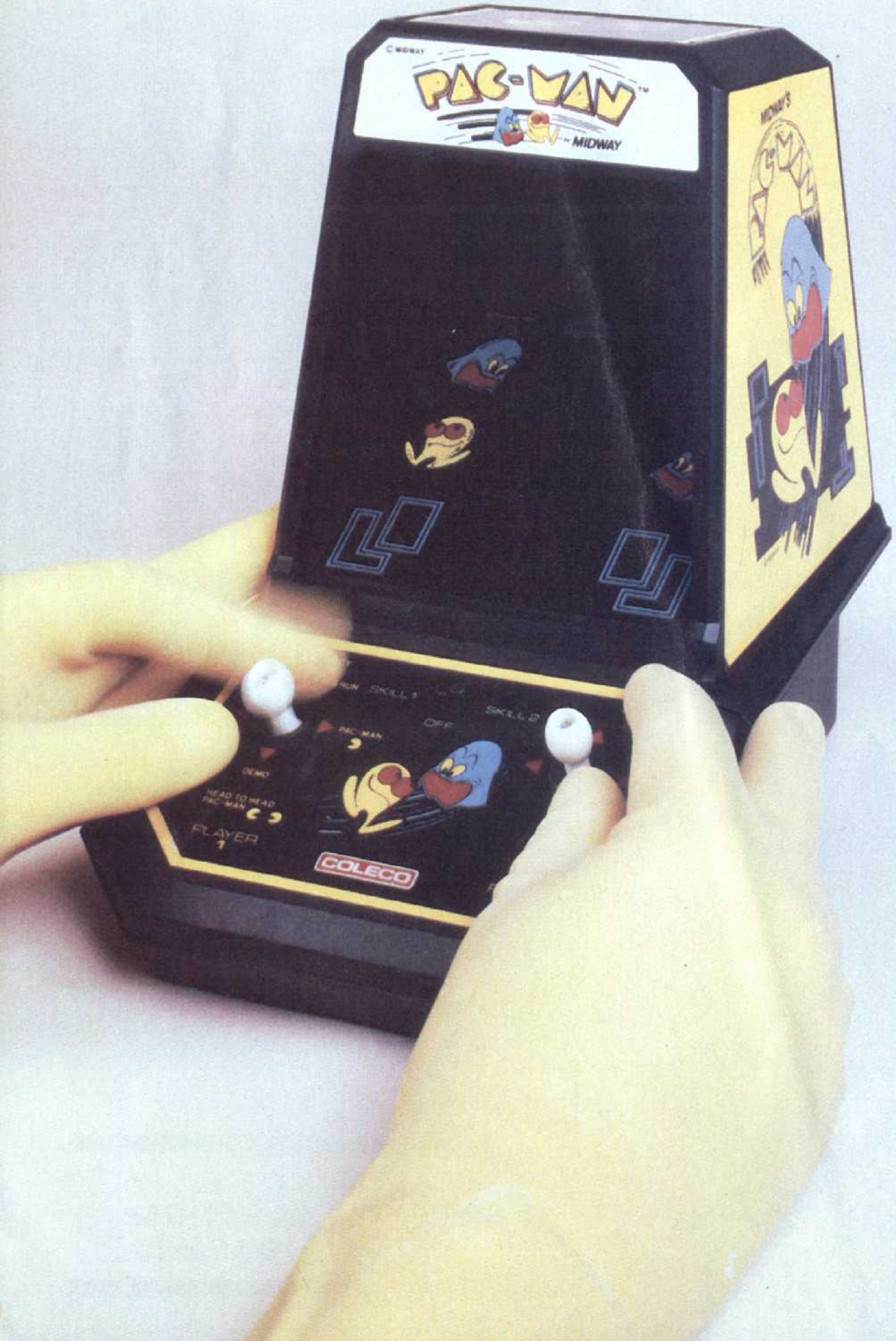
smocks with heavy duty nuke-washer gloves and an extendable stainless steel tweezer, if possible.

FROGGER

SCREEN—Love this screen! Real fine resolution and sharp color contrast. Some things have been changed for the new format but they're really neato in their own way. The trucks are red/turquoise cartoon numbers that are even more fun than dismantled Indian jewelry. Froggie-baby can actually change facial expressions! It's gamut-of-emotions city, featuring wonderment, satisfaction, grouchiness and vile pleasure. The turtles are very likeable, even if they do look like depressed ladybugs. The logs? What d'ya expect?

What's an "arcade experience," anyway?

This screen's so clear, I can see my face!



SOUND—Same hoppity tweets as the arcade and cart versions. Difference is the horrendous snake alarm, which sounds like a combination of the worst characteristics of air raid sirens and jittery lizards climbing patio furniture.

THEME SONG—Same dim tweedly as the other versions only it seems even *longer!* And you have to *sit there and like it* if you wanna play.

CONTROLS—Praise Froggie! This one's got a reset button so you can abort at any time! I want one of these on all Coleco games in the future, got that, guys? Oh yes, the tiny joystick adapts far better to Frogger than the other games.

PLAYFIELD—The adaptation to baby form makes for less "thinking" time and more desperate swipes. Fine with me! There are fewer lanes of motor vehicles and pond hazards, another plus for spigot-fists such as myself. But wait! No lady frog to jump on! Is nothing sacred?

ACTION—Here's where the dot-at-a-time motion really helps. Once you get your timing down, you're set. My only problem was predicting when the turtles were about to dive, because they don't change colors or anything on this one. Forced-snorkels, I say.

DONKEY KONG

SCREEN—This is another stand-alone model that punts the VCS's rump. Resolution that's so sharp it almost hurts your eyes is just one of the visual attractions here. Donk himself looks more like a moth in a Ku Klux Klan robe than an ape, but it's awright, really! Mario and Bernice are also very sharp. Flaming barrels are flaming barrels.

SOUND—Peep, peep, peep—what all can be said about these silly sound effects? Picture your own feets making baby bird noises every step as you walk down the street followed by every cat in town.

TITLE SONG—Simian Dragnet squawks.

CONTROLS—The joystick is very sensitive for such a stubby critter, which is unsettling at first. Sometimes I had to push once to get two steps, which is a real problem around the edges. You can't actually see the stupid carpenter plummet to his death, making suicide runs strictly no fun. No complaints on the jump button.

PLAYFIELD—Kong adapts well to the rectangular screen, it being of the ladder variety. Plus, it's another Coleco transformation that beats Atari's bogus teeter-totter rope-trick all to hell.

ACTION—The drastically reduced screen area makes for less of a freewheeling game than the original. That's made up for, however, by the dot-dot-dot action that perfectly compliments the timing nature of the contest. Only the ladders are trouble—Mario can get nailed even if he's just standing next to one. Could make the runt superstitious.

photos by Larry Kaplan

GALAXIAN

SCREEN—Pretty hot pix here. The little red and blue pseudo Spiderman figures are as clean and clear as the inside of VIDIOT's piggybank. The big G's themselves look like neon sandbags but who's counting?

SOUND—You should hear the screaming missiles on this one! They sound like a meatgrinder full of parakeets, inspiring the player to kill fast and move on. When you get blasted, the speaker spits out an electronic nyah-nyah-nyah followed by the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth, thus spelling V for Victory for the machine. Wotta wise guy!

THEME SONG—"It's Howdy Doody Time" for the intro and some snaky mideastern thing for the outro. Both reprehensible!

CONTROLS—Here we find the correct ratio of sensitivity to grabability. I must confess I had trouble controlling with my right paw while firing away with the left. Next time I'll try it *without* the straitjacket.

PLAYFIELD—A bottom shooter like this is easily converted into the tabletop rectangle. One nasty twist is the aliens' ability to move out of laser range along the edges. No fair, but did Lynn Anderson ever promise you a rose garden?

ACTION—You're familiar with the phrase fast 'n' furious, right? Well this minute melee is so F&F, you'll soon suffer from the malady known to a certain football announcer as "ragtag of the mind." But really, when you consider that each and every one of us wimpy Americans watch a year and a half of TV commercials in our whoopee lifetimes, what's the big beef?

PAC-MAN

SCREEN—Hit the switch and you're first greeted with a rather unimpressive looking red maze. But when play begins, the yellow dots appear and it's hot lunch on the rocks! *Far* superior graphics to the Atari VCS version. The baddies (Inky, Dinky, Sidney and Satchmo) are solid-Jackson here, so there's none of that annoying VCS flicker.

SOUND—As you roll along your dot-slurping way, a fearsome wailing begins, like something unspeakably Islamic is about to occur. The only way to stop it is to snarf the power tabs, making for true escape-from-Alcatraz vibes. The usual "deteriorating sound" (as our office deterioration expert deemed it) occurs when your Pac-Man becomes the chompee.

THEME SONG—God, I hate these tunes! This one is a kind of bad ballpark organ diddle that leaves you expecting a crowd to shout "CHARGE!"

CONTROLS—Here's where we run into a little trouble. If you're familiar with the frustration of trying to maneuver Pac-Lips around corners in the home version, this one'll really finish you off. The Joystick? Stubville, pops. You could wear mittens on the wrong hand and not do any worse.

PLAYFIELD—Making the maze fit a rectangular format changes things considerably. It's much harder to escape entrapment, regardless of your crime.

ACTION—Tell ya one thing—these ghosts are *too smart!* They communicate via mental telepathy and attempt to gang-chomp you at any moment. Worse, my favorite escape valve—the gate to the other side of the maze—doesn't work because the bleepers *wait* there for you. One big disadvantage of this new format is that the motion pokes along a dot at a time, making anticipation a piece of turnip quiche. ■

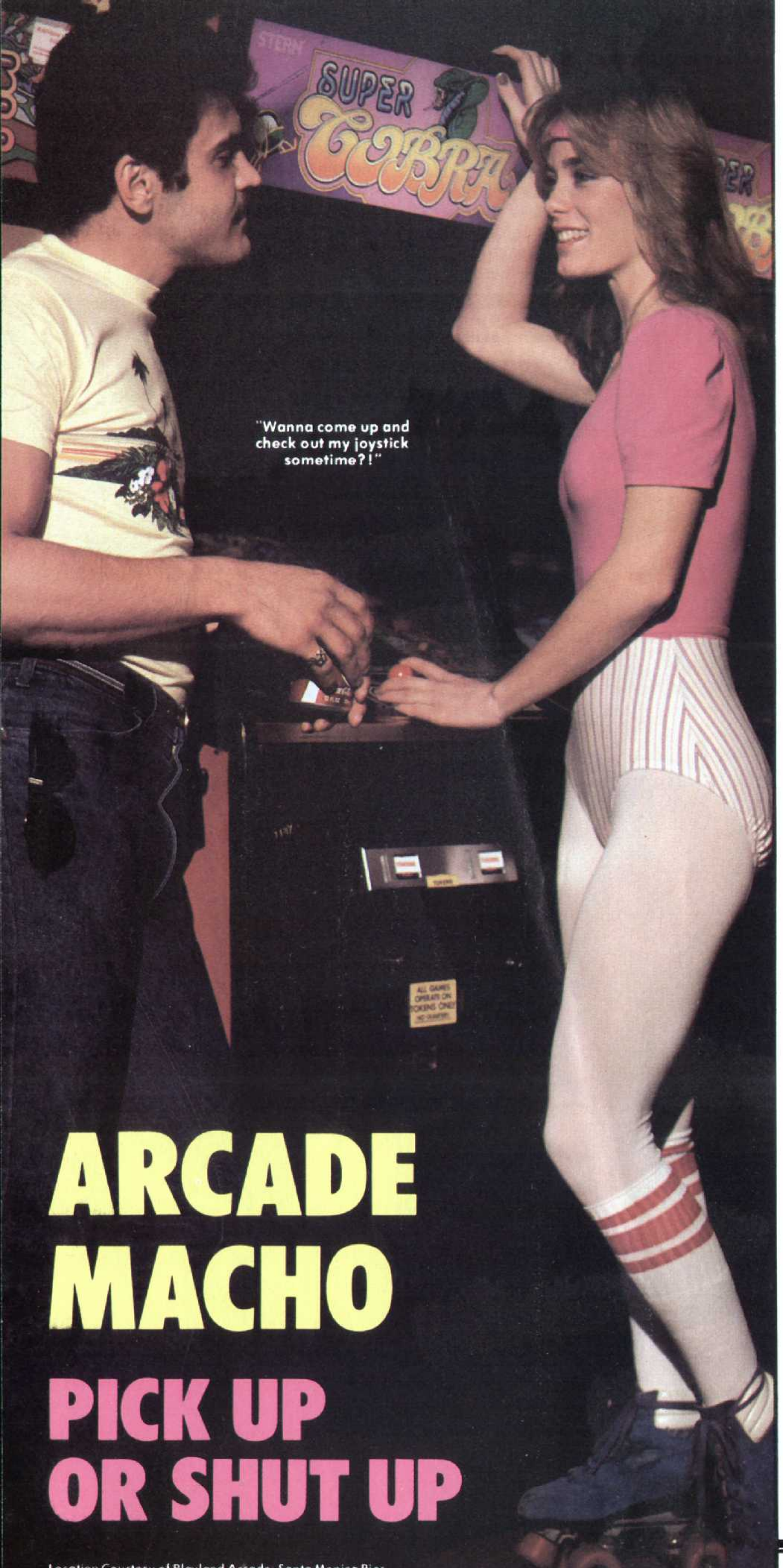
Green hands in morning, sailor take warning!

The Official
FROGGER
by SEGA
SEGA
SKILL 1
OFF
SKILL 2
RESET
COLECO

ARCADE MACHO

PICK UP OR SHUT UP

BY MARK J. NORTON



"Wanna come up and check out my joystick sometime?!"

Location Courtesy of Playland Arcade, Santa Monica Pier

Ever got into a fight over a girl? *Sure* you have! As a red-blooded American guy, would you stoop to wimpdom by allowing some geek to steal your girl without a bloodletting fight? *Of course not!* Whether on the dance floor, football field, street or arcade we are fighting for but one thing: *Women!*

Women are the only motivational factor in a Man's life. Next to videogaming, cars, whiskey, football, fishing, soldiering, hunting and sailing, that is. And, pray tell, if there were no women to *show off* to, then *what's the point?*

Therefore you won't want to set foot in an arcade without a few lessons in manly comportment of the videogaming kind. Obviously, the breed of woman you'll find common in these garbage disposals for quarters play for keeps. And, *obviously*, there are other "men" who claim *our* sex as *theirs*. Despite their prowess at these interesting and undoubtedly manly games, many fit the definition of "wimp"—which is to be avoided at any cost, no matter how ridiculous. Would *you* do battle with the L.A. Raiders in a punk rock hair-*do* (not cut) and a pocket calculator strapped to you imitation leather belt that holds up you spandex pants? *Of course not!* Take your pick: Manhood or wimpdom.

Read Sylvia Plath, Judith Krantz or W.H. Auden? Over Robert Mitchum's *dead body!* Drink pina coladas? Seek the Duke's stomach and *burp it!* Cry over a dead rock star? To quote Josie Cotton, "Johnny Are You *Queer?*" As far as Men are concerned, Charles Olson is a lineman for the Pittsburgh Steelers, right?

Fact: all women love the smell of success. The more money you've got—or the higher the score—the better. Wonder *never again* why you see ugly old men with ungodly beautiful, sexy, voluptuous women. The deck is stacked—and if you're on the winning side, so are the women.

The only reason to go to the arcade, of course, is to *meet girls*. Can you honestly admit you enjoy spending every cent you've got at the arcade when, by applying a few rules of business horsesense, you can own your fave game for home use? No, you can't. Say it loud, say it proud: Girls Are *Great!!*

All *right*, men, the first lesson commences...let's discuss what Real Men Do Not Wear To Arcades. **Real men do not wear:**

1) *Pink Lacoste shirts.* If you're a preppie, that's entirely your own problem. Remember pink = Wimp. Any other color's acceptable. But if you really want to be a sex symbol—and what Man doesn't?—buy a VIDIOT t-shirt.

2) *Designer jeans.* Would John Wayne wear 'em? Naw, the Duke'd don nuthin'

Michael N. Marks

fancier than Levi's. And his word's *law*, right?

3) *Top siders.* Hey, you can't even *run* in the damn things. Any sort of tennis, basketball, jogging, all-around athletic shoe is In, Converse All-Stars being the coolest. All boots are manly (except the kind that feature the bags-at-the-ankle look which is strictly new wave/punk rock *jerk*-like), and cowboy boots are *obviously* the best way to get your point across. Or up.

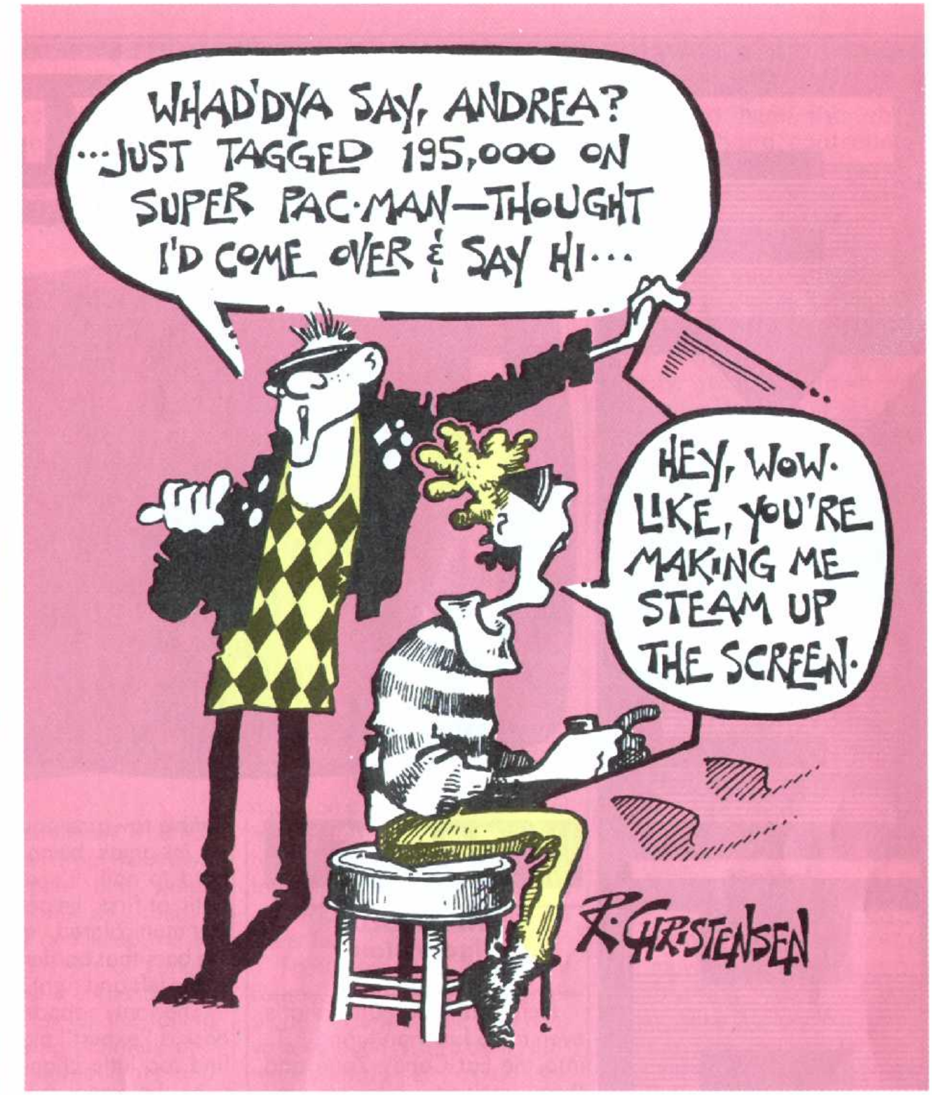
Before heading out for an afternoon of hopeful arcade fun, take a gander in front of the mirror. Any of your lunch still between your teeth? Scrub 'em *again*, sailor. There's nothing on earth that'll turn off all the little women quicker than mungmouth. Take a quick whiff o' the pits to make sure they're just so. Also, remove any gold chains, punk rock t-shirts and scarves. They aren't *manly*.

When entering the arcade, strut around the joint with your hands thrust deep in your pockets with an impervious scowl on your face. No, you don't own the place, but remember the law of Supply and Demand: *I demand that you supply me with as many women as I desire!* You gotta let the girls know who's boss, plain and direct.

Before playing your first round of, say, Robotron, you might want to buy a soft drink. How you drink the soda is *far* more important than what brand. Grasp the can firmly in the palm of your hand, fingers wrapped completely around it. Before taking the first swig, catch the eye of the hottest babe. As you lift the can to your lips (elbow bent 90°) propose a toast in her honor: *Here's lookin' "at" you!* Eyes locked in, throw your head back and empty half the contents down your gullet. Lowering the can, smile at her, then burp loudly. This is *essential* for your initial introduction. She'll feel that inner glow of security knowing that a Real Man is present. Then...

Walk away. There's plenty o' fish in the video sea. Besides, it'll be at least an hour before that girl will be coherent enough to start worshipping you. Always remember it's your moral obligation as an American Man to hit on as many females as possible.

One popular method of picking up girls at the arcade is by zeroing in on a filly having difficulty on your favorite game. Stride over after she's blown the game a few times and say "Havin' a rough go at it, dollface? Lemme show ya the ropes." Proceed to explain the intricacies and finer points of the game. Be polite but firm. After explaining, drop a token into the slot, and then "coach" her. After she triples her original score, you can bet it'll be *Suckface City* from there on in!


WHAD'DYA SAY, ANDREA? ...JUST TAGGED 195,000 ON SUPER PAC-MAN—THOUGHT I'D COME OVER & SAY HI...
HEY, WOW. LIKE, YOU'RE MAKING ME STEAM UP THE SCREEN.
R. CHRISTENSEN

Let's reiterate a fact: good women are worth fighting for. If you spot some Elmo employing the aforementioned method, sidle up next to the non-couple, tap the jerk on the shoulder and say "Excuse me, *cupcake*, your mother says it's time for your *Ovaltine* and *beddie-bye!*" The idea, manly reader, is to simply embarrass the worm enough so he'll be forced to crawl back under the rock from whence he came. Use your lurid imagination. Occasionally, however, the breezebrain will miss the point: stronger medicine must be administered. *This* doctor prescribes (delivered in the loudest voice possible): "When did they let *YOU* out of the *TERMINAL HERPES WARD!?!*" Once he's on all fours, headed for the door, it's a mere skate to the desired goal. It's not really all that fair, but a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.

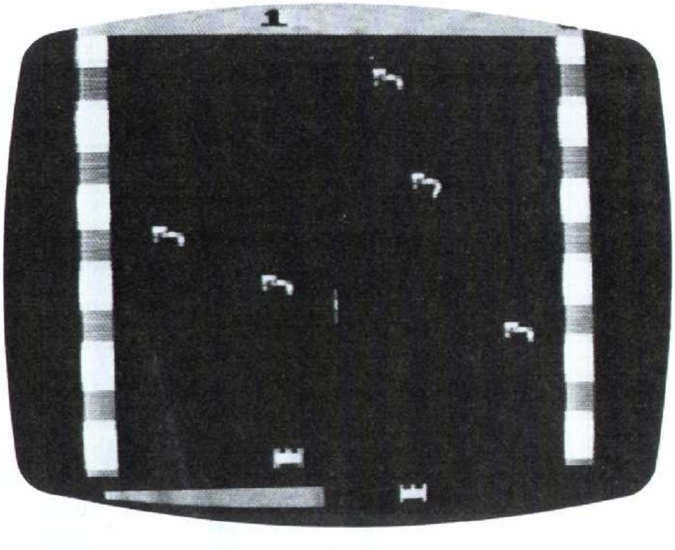
Zero in on a filly having difficulty on your favorite game.

In some instances, you may even be able to play fair. Let's assume there's a lustful lovely gazing on some dope racking up points on a game you *know* you can stomp the snot out of him on. Walk over, tap *Percy* on the shoulder and challenge him to a duel, winner (nod toward the babe) take all. The girl will be flattered that two men are going to duel over her—it's an old trick that works every time. The only *trick* here's not only do you have to beat the sap, ya gotta beat him *bad*. Show what a worthless sleazebag he really is.

If you're really smart, before even challenging the bozo, hip your buddies to what you're gonna do. Tell them that after you demolish the sucker at the game, you want one guy to approach the Big Loser and say, "Let *meeee* be the first to kick you when you're down: maybe you need a *pair o' granny glasses!*" Have your second pal say, "Don't worry—I hear they're making a *braille* version of that game!" Your third and final friend should say something like, "Please don't cry out here—go in the *little girls' room!*" And you, the Cool Winner, should turn to your new prize and ask, "Wanna hop in my van and listen to the new Rush album?" Guaranteed to work every time!! ■

EYE HAND

WHAT'S NEW FOR VIDIOTS



CARTS

THRESHOLD
Tigervision
(Atari VCS)

Here's a new game that's even more fun than luring E.T. into the Eat Candy Zone and then melting his crummy Reese's Pieces with rocket exhaust.

For starters, it's an EZ learn. There you sit in the usual partially-mobile spaceship, blasting waves of missile-spitting aliens that can attack from three directions. You get six baddies per attack and eleven waves altogether, which repeat with increasing difficulty as you plug along.

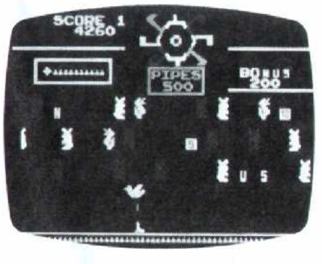
Only, these are not your ordinary space villains. In no particular order, you can expect to encounter barking earmuffs, rubber gulls, nuclear cooling towers, pulsating lamb hearts, dough ponies, razorblade box kites, tap dancing Chevy insignias, seeded-out grain dealer's lips, somewhat retiring carwash brushes, frozen smiles of Country/Western entertainers and topographical maps of dry counties in Western Illinois.

A particularly winning point is that the actual surface area of the targets changes as they tumble towards you, the Chevy insignias being especially hard to nail. It's almost hypnotic at first, helped along by the multicolored, ever-changing bars that border the screen to the left and right.

The only apparent drawback is "expert" players might find too little change of difficulty between rounds. That can be remedied by switching over to skill B, where the aliens shoot *guided* missiles at your face instead of regular stoopid ones.

Now if only they could add a twelfth wave of plummeting Surgeon Generals for the player to—in Mr. S.G.'s words—*police!*

Rick Johnson



CARNIVAL
Coleco
(ColecoVision)

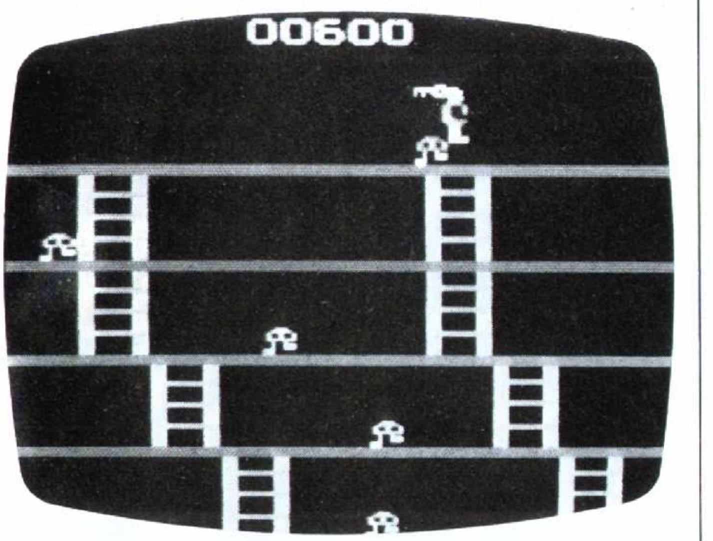
At last the big shots who make these things are wising up and realizing that no matter what mumbo-jumbo they hear from other jerks, it's *great* that videogames are violent! Trouble is, most of them aren't violent enough, or when they are, they wimp out and make it so you kill dopey things that don't really exist! Don't know about you, but *I* can't relate to shooting a big space-pod, and if *you* can that's your problem.

Carnival is great because you get to kill *live ducks*! That's right, it's the same set-up as the old arcade game, you're at some sort of shooting gallery and you're shooting at owls, stupid-looking rabbits, numbers and letters. The numbers and letters are no big deal to kill—you get more bullets for the numbers and more points if you spell "bonus" by shooting out the letters, whoop-ti-doo—and anyway the rabbits and owls are stupid, too. But there's also *ducks*, OK? You have to get them before they get too close to the bottom row, and if you *don't*, they suddenly start taking off and flying right at *you*, which is something you're supposed to be scared of, right, because then they start eating your *bullets* (stupid!) and when you run out, that's it. So if you get them when they're in the top row, OK. You're the guy who has to make the choice, though, about when you want to get them.

Yeah, so that's about it. If you shoot out these whirling pipes real fast, you get less ducks coming at you, which you might want if you don't like killing them, it's up to you. Best thing about killing them, though, is when you get them all these *bears* come out, and not only do you get to shoot them, you actually just *wound* them! They start running away from you real fast like they're in pain or something, and it's up to you to wing them again! Then you get another round of the ducks, but with more points this time.

This game is actually pretty good. If you want, there's this thing on the side of the screen you can just keep shooting at to make the carnival music turn on and off, but after a while that gets pretty stupid.

Louis Sleagle



DEADLY DUCK
FAST EDDIE
20th Century Fox
(Atari VCS)

It's no surprise that the entertainment giant responsible for movies ranging from Tom Mix silents to *Star Wars* has done a triple gainer into the pool of video game cartridges. What *is* surprising is the high quality of their early releases. The First Wave from "Games of the Century" includes these two, Beany Bopper and Worm War I. Fox is accelerating into a Second Wave of Alien, Mega Force and Porky's that's just as promising.

Deadly Duck is a scatological Space Invaders. Instead of hordes of aliens cannon-izing a lone defender, DD gives gamesters fleets of flying crabs armed with gold bricks. But these plummeting projectiles *aren't* bricks, regardless of Fox instructions. Check it out. They're baby-poop-yellow (and admittedly square) turds!

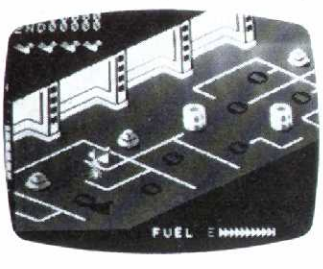
Our tough mallard protects his swamp environment, though. DD either blows the grouchy polluters out of the sky or catches the bung-bombs to safely dispose of them elsewhere. The multiphase game increases its adversaries with quicker movements and adds a Toxic Factor as lethal as Dioxin mouthwash: steadily growing swarms of dragonflies (I prefer to think of them as EPA staffers) interfere with the Duck's mission of cleanliness. The fidgety flits even drop their own fart fog upon him when they're mistakenly disturbed.

To survive and keep the tidiest marsh this side of Venus, the player must contend with the misdirection of the falling turds, the flying polluters and the floating bureaucrats and their deadly gas attacks. By moving constantly and playing the edges of the screen, Deadly (Eco-) Duck can pile up points quicker than a state waste dump.

Donkey Kong kings will be right at home on Fast Eddie's turf. If you've seen the terrific TV commercials (tape 'em—they're as upbeat and catchy as summer Shasta's), you'll catch on quick. Ed's the cat sporting the Buddy Holly (or is it Ed Norton?) look, assigned the task of acquiring various prizes—hearts, teapots, fish, tanks, jets, smiling faces, telephones?, skulls?—and dodging the pesky Sneakers (I peg 'em for Fire Escape Cops) all over his tenement. After nabbing ten, a key appears on the rooftop Sneaker that will open Eddie's way into the next housing complex. By jumping over and climbing his opponents, Fast Eddie can become as rich as a cat burglar.

"Hey! Hey, Ralphie-Boy!!"

Bill Knight



ZAXXON
Coleco
(ColecoVision)

I'm thoroughly convinced Zaxxon is the best home videogame I've ever played—and, at this point, pretty well convinced Coleco's got the best home game system going. If you've got doubts, try Zaxxon and see for yourself.

Much like the arcade game, Zaxxon is noteworthy first for the unusual perspective it offers. The much-ballyhooed "three dimensional" effect might be a *little* overblown (at least until they start bringing holograms to the arcade), but for perspective alone, Zaxxon is outclassed by no one for its sheer feel of *being there*.

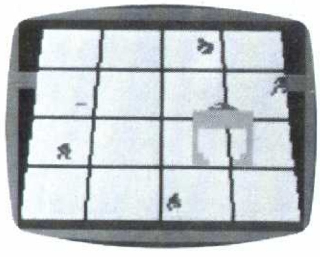
The object of the game, of course, is to fly your fighter plane through space and over various alien asteroids to ultimately encounter Zaxxon, the "mighty robot"—and to destroy the poor sucker. In between encounters, you've got to manipulate the plane through gaps in fortress walls, destroy enemy fighter planes, gun turrets and "mobots," Zaxxon's guards, robot missiles and much more. Simultaneously, as you pass over each asteroid, you've got to destroy fuel tanks in order to replenish your own supply. Depending on which of the four game options you play, this alone becomes increasingly more difficult.

One of the factors that makes Zaxxon a masterwork is that it's *never* either too difficult or too simple. You can enjoy the game from the start—as long as you maintain play on the first difficulty level, exploring everything you'll be running up against. As skill increases, you can shift into higher game options, but be careful—I've been playing for two months and can barely manage on level three. It's *tough*.

A word here also about Coleco's hand controllers: they're perfect. More than any other ColecoVision game, Zaxxon seems most suited to the Coleco control. A few plays bring you a precision in your left and right diving and banking that'll be surprising. And with its high graphic quality, you'll be drawn into the game faster than you can say "What about *Atari?*"

And you probably won't want to say it.

Kevin Christopher



TRON DEADLY DISCS
Mattel
(Intellivision)

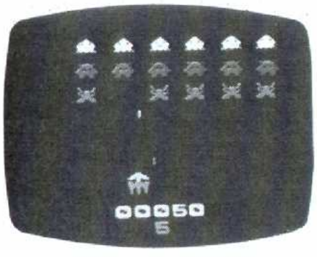
This game is like the part of the movie where the guys are all throwing frisbees at each other. I like it a lot. What happens is, you're Tron the hero and these guys keep coming out of the walls, three at a time, thowing frisbees at you. What's neat is you got a frisbee *you* can throw, too, and all you gotta do is hit each guy and blammo, down he goes. If you just hit one and keep missing the others, though, pretty soon another guy comes outta the walls and starts throwing *his* frisbee, which stinks.

After a while, if you kill enough guys, this big thing comes out called the Recognizer. It looks like a big shoebox on stilts and you have to shoot it in the eye at just the right time or else you get paralyzed for a minute.

You can really rack up big points if you want, there isn't any limit or anything. Plus your frisbee also works like a shield, and what's weird is if you *don't* kill a guy but just block his frisbee with yours you get just as many points! It's more fun to kill 'em, though.

They got lots of different levels on this game so if you stink or something it'll still be easy and not a gyp. I think this game is really cool, though. You should buy it.

Louis Sleagle



GORF
CBS
(Atari VCS)

Arcade or home computer, Gorf sounds like Smurf throwing up. But a has-been in the amusement center can be a dark horse game cartridge. Not only has CBS wrested obnoxious operator John Madden from the football booth, *Saturday Night Live*, Lite Beer and *TV Guide* to star the tactless titan in a big-bucks bid for television commercial fame, but this *game* is fun too.

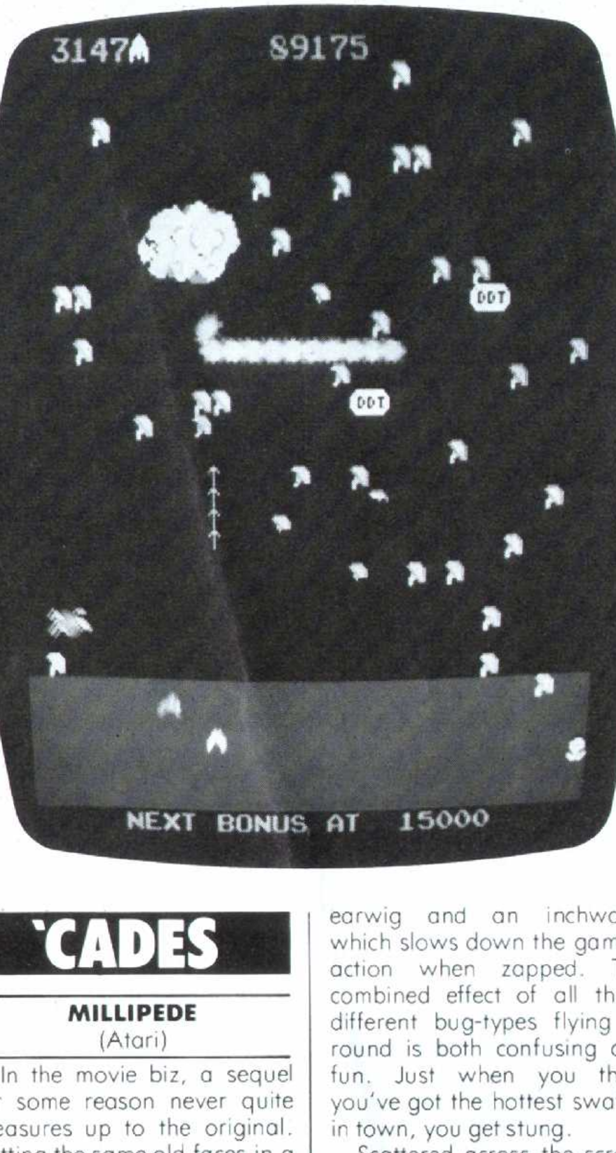
Like the original, the player's "space cadet" mission is to repel waves of attacking invaders (stop me if you've heard this). Through four flights of intruders—a Space Invaders, a laser/fighter attack, a spiral diver emerging from a warp hole and the flagship—you get your chances to keep from losing your five lives.

The flag, or mother, ship is a mother, Oed. Although it's about as sleek and piercing as a stagecoach, its only two vulnerable points are pretty tiny, like aiming for Madden's belly button from ten paces. Well, not *that* big. But when you score, CBS pulls the graphic stops. 'Til now, the mainly black screen is only changed when you're snuffed, when it flashes ash-white. After zapping mother, though, the screen lights up like a Roy G. Biv spectrum class.

Two unique shooting "flaws" are 1) who can intercept the incoming shells?, and 2) "*shoot-us interruptus*". That's a quirk stemming from your self-*stopping* cannon. Each shot stops any previously fired try, so that your last shot will disappear before hitting the target if you press the red button again.

Fortunately, the first few rounds are pretty slow; handy for those of us who imagine blasting away at light speed but leave the parking brake on. Slower, in fact, than an ex-NFL coach in a burp tourney.

Bill Knight



'CADES

MILLIPEDE
(Atari)

In the movie biz, a sequel for some reason never quite measures up to the original. Putting the same old faces in a different setting to achieve a similar result rarely works on film—and seldom clicks at the box office (*Rocky* notwithstanding).

But vid game creators apparently know something those cigar chomping cinemoguls haven't been able to figure out—how to turn last year's model into this year's quarter sucker. Millipede is little more than the same old thing, but there's so much more that it leaves Centipede in its dust.

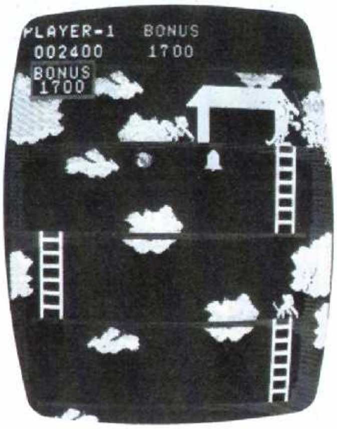
Millipede's graphics are quite similar to its predecessor's, but the game puts out a great deal more color. That's because instead of four types of insects to squash there are eight—including a devious beetle, lightning-quick mosquito, noisy bee, a personable earwig and an inchworm which slows down the game's action when zapped. The combined effect of all these different bug-types flying around is both confusing and fun. Just when you think you've got the hottest swatter in town, you get stung.

Scattered across the screen are a number of DDT bombs, which when detonated will ace all of the millipedes in its immediate destroy zone. Best not to waste these precious pesticides until after the rhumba chain passes by—they're worth points by themselves, but lots more if the enemy is crowded around.

Another new feature of Millipede is the choice of advanced scoring. Before the game begins, a player selects how many points he/she would like to start with—zero, 15,000 or 30,000. Of course, the degree of difficulty increases with each increase in points, and starting a game with 30,000 points on the screen is like knocking over a well-stocked beehive.

In all, Millipede is a vast improvement over Centipede in terms of both entertainment and levels of play. If you quit playing Centipede because you got too good at it, check this out. You'll probably get hooked all over again.

Peter Meyer



KANGAROO
(Atari)

Whenever a new game appears at the arcade, I'm never the first to play it. By choice. Usually somone else with a pocketful of tokens is more than willing to be the first on their block to master the new game. Which suits me just fine, thanks, as I'm an insufferable cheapskate, and would rather learn from someone else's mistakes.

I purchased a few bux worth of tokens and headed for Kangaroo. Naturally, due to my luck, nary a soul was twiddling upon it. The Ugly Voice Of The Inevitable then spoke: *Yer on yer own, dimwit*.

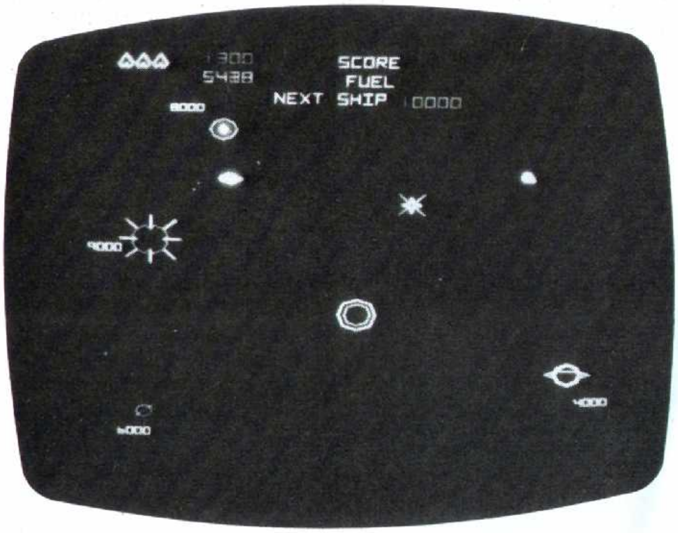
I dropped the coins right into the slot and placed my hands on the controls. The Kangaroo hopped onto the screen. I made the 'Roo hop. I made the 'Roo duck a flying apple. The 'Roo jumped up and ate some fruit. The 'Roo climbed many ladders. Then a vicious monkey leaped from the bushes and killed 'Roo. The 'Roo took much abuse. Me too.

After many vain attempts to get to the top, this kid sidled up and saved the rest of my net worth with this simple statement: *Kangaroo is the same as Donkey Kong.*

The kid was right. Aside from different characters, flying objects and settings, Kangaroo *is* the same as Donkey Kong. Ya gotta rescue the prisoner which, in Kangaroo's case, is a baby 'Roo. When I finally hopped, jumped and generally combatted my way to the top and made a daring rescue, was I a hero or what? Would I be rewarded with cheers, champagne or more importantly, *my money back?* Nope. The reward came in three letters from the mouth of the pint-sized marsupial—MOM!!

Don't know about you, but I'm not even ready to be someone's *dad,* let alone mom. Besides, I'd rather rescue a damsel in distress any day of the week over a kangaroo. Boo, Kangaroo.

Mark "Heinie" Norton



GRAVITAR

(Atari)

If Albert Einstein was still alive, he'd not only be loaded down with tokens to take on Gravitar, he'd probably be weighted with royalty checks. The challenging arcade action game features elements of Lunar Landing and Asteroids, and relies on something like Einstein's Unified Field Theory in a Lone Ranger plot.

As the coin drops on this science-terror trick, the player's treated to a visual yahoo. An entire solar system of five planets, a sun with too much gravity and a couple of nasty space cruisers with the player in their sights fills the screen. Three ships are provided for a series of planetary missions, and good luck is as necessary as a set of hyperactive eye/hand muscles.

The control panel is a barebones futuristic Chevy dashboard: two rotators, a thrust, a fire and a specialty lunge plunger (instead of Asteroids' hyper-space, however, there's a tractor/shield). With these buttons, a player maneuvers to the planet of choice (hint: head for the lower value worlds first). After pulling within its atmosphere, the player's ship begins to fall toward that planet's surface instead of the sun's.

The screen then isolates on the battle at hand. Flying sentries threaten collisions, bunkers of varying accuracy and aggressiveness pepper the geometric terrain, and tantalizing, vulnerable fuel dumps await fill 'er up instructions from the ship.

On each planet, the protected fuel is available if the player can manipulate the ship to hover above it while engaging the tractor beam. Gravitar sets the player up,though, by varying the intensities of the worlds' gravities. Topping off your tank on World One is a snap compared to trying to get a free pump on World Four.

Besides different gravities, other frills range from the nuclear world ("The Red Planet")—where the player must penetrate an angular maze to defuse a near-meltdown nuke at the planet's core—to the Cave World—where the fuel (and the sharp-shooting outposts) lie beneath the ground.

When all the dirty work is blown up and hosed down on each planet, Gravitar credits the player with a complete mission and a couple of thousand fuel units. Of course, getting off a "neutralized" world requires more fuel than swerving all over the geography, so the player's only ahead briefly. Controlling the entire system is rewarded by transferring the player to a parallel universe, where the nuclear/gravity/electro-magnetic hijinx and horrors start over.

Strategies will change with a player's pocket change, but Gravitar at least places its challenges in a flexible framework that allows players the freedom to choose different routes. Asteroids is the Dull Galaxy after a bout with Gravitar, and Lunar Lander has the right tools but no excitement. With Atari's blending of the two sophisticated arcade games, the tactician and the dexterity-minded player can be satisfied.

As Big Al Einstein said, "It's all relative."

Bill Knight

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HISCORE

SATAN'S HOLLOW

(Bally)

Motivation is the biggest problem we're talking about with Bally's Satan's Hollow. For the price of a token you find your hand wrapped around a Tron-like joystick connected to a rocket-firing ship—but where is this game going?

To Hell, of course.

At the second stage of this game, the player does actual battle with Satan and a host of fellow fire-breathing minions—Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Old Nick. The demons spit out long, animated spears of fire which add color and hostility to an otherwise sluggish contest (maybe they've got great pepperoni pizzas Down There), but the goal is merely a higher score—not salvation.

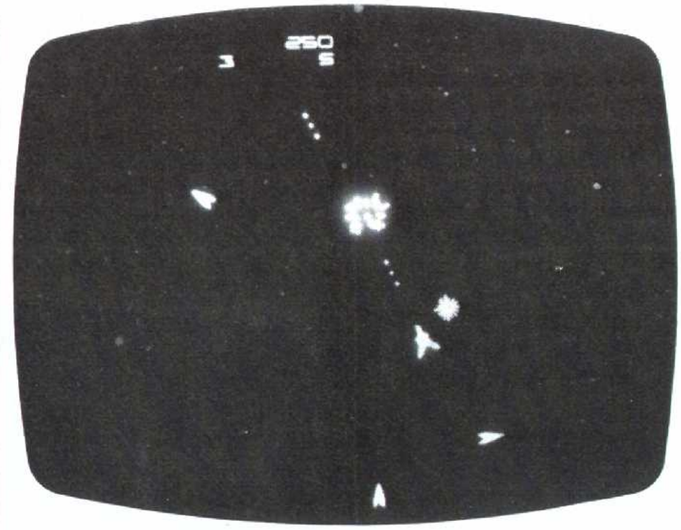
To get into the Land of Satan requires an M.A. in Architecture. Well, at least you have to be able to build a small bridge (although with the bridge graphics, this requires some imagination). Trying to prevent your ship from getting all its bricks in one span are flying Gargoyles, MX-armed Bridge Bombers and the dastardly Egg Thrower. Not one of them has very good aim, but then, they really don't have to. While you are concentrating on collecting bridge sections you might as well be the side of a barn, and even a kamikaze Gargoyle can run into one of those. The game's shield feature is effective—but only for *very* short periods of time.

What Satan's Hollow lacks in originality, it makes up for in degree of difficulty. If you can't be bothered to wade through the six screens worth of instructions which run while the game sits idle, it might take a good week's pay just to get the point. Evil, *n'est-ce pas?* Even once you master the program, it's still pretty tough to escape from Ol' Torch Breath & Co.

Some type of journey or quest would've made Satan's Hollow an infinitely more interesting game. As it is, the only reward is points. And you sure as hell can't take *them* with you.

Bill Paige

SOLAR QUEST
(Cinematronic)



In this exciting but disturbing arcade game, the player is essentially the villain of the video story, acquiring points for murdering the defenseless citizens of the solar system shown.

Solar Quest is a curious repackaging of Starcastle and Eliminator, with similar visuals and nearly identical effects. The finite globe screen (the ships can "circle" the screen, like Starcastle) has a sparkling sun in the center, fatal to nothing except the player's spaceship, which disintegrates upon contact with the sun. Since it doesn't move but attracts the rest of the objects hurtling about it, the yellow sun can be overlooked until you slide into it like a million-mile pole at the intersection you missed.

Fleets of alien starships are the benign opposition. They don't shoot at your sleek, arrow-shaped ship, but just flit about, flirting with disaster until they provoke a collision. Your controls are six buttons: thruster, cannon, rotate-right, rotate-left and two desperation moves, an Asteroids-style hyper escape and a nuke, which needs to be pushed *twice* (once to be propelled and again to be ignited). The technology is easily mastered after a few plays, lowering the Frustration Quotient quickly. Then you realize the game's reality.

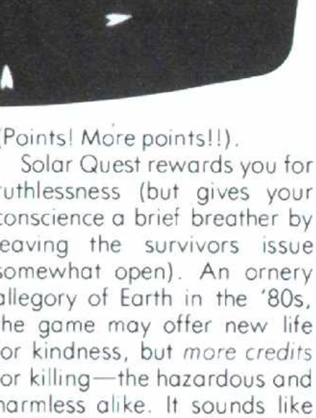
To score points, you shoot any other aircraft before you run into them or the sun. There are three phases/lives of increasing difficulty, with eight different types of craft travelling by. Some barely bother the area, others haphazardly stop-and-start at your bumper. If zapping innocent, albeit reckless, pilots wasn't strange enough, Cinematronic tempts you with the Solar Quest Decision: "Mercy or Progress?"

After each opposing ship is destroyed, a tiny asterisk floats away from the dead ship's last location: a life "boat." It'll drift lazily toward the sun until it's engulfed, until you rescue it (by accumulating 25 survivor shuttles, you can earn an extra life), or until you vaporize the little pests (Points! More points!!).

Solar Quest rewards you for ruthlessness (but gives your conscience a brief breather by leaving the survivors issue somewhat open). An ornery allegory of Earth in the '80s, the game may offer new life for kindness, but *more credits* for killing—the hazardous and harmless alike. It sounds like Beirut or Boston, except when your ship's annihilated here (or the nuke is used), all distant survivors and floating debris fly into the sun.

Just like here—a no-win yuk.

Bill Knight



BURGER TIME
(Bally)

"It's exactly what you'd expect," I was explaining to a friend who wondered why I was late for a vegetarian dinner. "The game features a chef named Peter Pepper who scrambles up and down ladders and across beams in Donkey Kong fashion to a rhythm of rising and falling bleeps, trying to construct a row of monumental hamburgers. This he does by running over the various ingredients which then topple from their respective levels to the level below until they find themselves resting comfortably between two nice buns.

"Of course, Pepper's life is hardly a bed of romaine and swiss, since he's pursued by Messrs. Hot Dog, Pickle, and Egg, all of whom have the power to fry *his* buns. Pepper's defense turns out to be a limited arsenal of his namesake, which you control with two buttons on either side of the joystick. Additional pepper can be stockpiled by overtaking ice cream cones, french fries, or cups of tea that briefly appear at selected locations, which if you had the time, you should be able to predict. And if Peter Pepper completes three double deckers before he's blown away, a new screen emerges and the action resumes."

"So where's the kick? Where's the violence that'll lead to orgasm?" my friend asks, alfalfa sprouts and delicate shards of feta cheese dropping from his beard.

I admit that all the violence is G-rated. The only harm comes to Messrs. Pickly, Hot Dog, and Egg if they happen to be underneath a burger component as it topples down. The player scores points for such a maneuver. *Parents* magazine would approve. So would Disney. Or Pope John Paul. E.T. for sure.

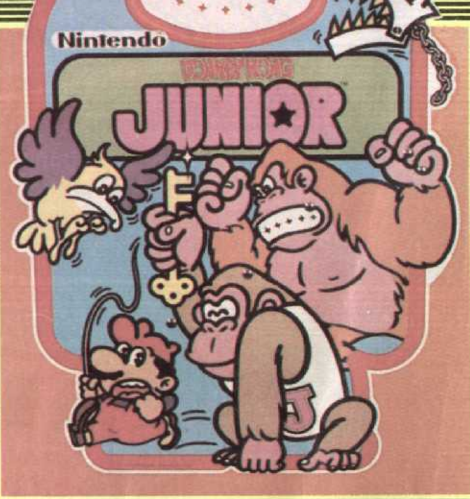
"You gotta be kidding," he mutters.

The following day I tried an experiment. I offered an anonymous young arcadian eight tokens to play his favorite games, as long as he shoved the first two into Burger Time. Unfortunately, after fulfilling the requirements, said youngster wandered over to Donkey Kong and was immediately intimidated by a ruffian twice his size. And so on down the aisle until he found himself back at Burger Time, resigned to enjoy the bleeping solitude and free tokens.

At least Burger Time doesn't attract fools.

George Piner

ATARI
Kangaroo
SUPER
PAC-MAN
Bally MIDWAY
namco
ASTEROIDS
DELUXE
CENTIPEDE
Williams
Moon Patrol
SOLAR QUEST



THE NAME GAME

BY J. KORDOSH

Two things got me interested in the Name Game. The first is the rather obvious tendency for vidgames to fall into certain categories, going strictly by their names. I leave it to the reader to guess what Space Invaders, Moon Patrol, Asteroids, and Galaxian have in common. The second was an inexplicable gap in the Lust For Kill category. Why isn't there a game called Smeared Blood? Shoot To Maim? Ultimate Destruction? You know, something the whole family can enjoy.

Once the wheels started turning, I began to wonder if there's a connection between the name of the game and the person who plays. Surely no self-respecting Zaxxon freak wants to actually be seen doing business with something called Donkey Kong, Jr. What would the guys say??

It seemed only natural that the manufacturers—hereafter known as the Ems—have studied this very question. Let's face it, you don't just throw something out there and call it Gorf unless you have a very good reason. (It turned out that this theory was only partially correct. Sometimes the Ems start remembering their pre-natal vocabulary for no reason at all. And no one can stop them.) But since they have more than a few tokens tied up in this thing, it's safe to conclude that the Ems have already written the vid-equivalent of *What To Name The Baby*. No, it's up to us to translate it into English.

THE CATEGORIES, PUH-LEEZ

The Name Game is played in the following way: each participant occupies a corner of a hexagon. As new games are unleashed upon the terrified public, they go to their aesthetic corner, which begins to throb and grow! The ultimate goal is to become the largest corner, also known as the Big Mazuma, at which point you get to beat up all the other corners, mess around with their sisters, stuff like that.

Surely no self-respecting Zaxxon freak wants to actually be seen doing business with something called Donkey Kong, Jr. What would the guys say?

FIRST CORNER: SPACE CADETS!

Space, space, bo bace, banana fanna fo face, fee fi...whoops, we're in the middle of a story here! Sorry, I'll just press the old "musical stream of consciousness destruct-button" and be right with you.

There, that's better. Clearly the weightiest corner, space names crowd the void like nobody's business. It's a good bet that half—or better—of the games around have monickers that allude to things *not of this Earth!* Are we talking about the Howitzer Hammer? Humorous bathroom plaques? The reflecting dog leash?? NO! We're talking about Galaxian and Missile Command and Asteroids—hell, almost everything since Space Invaders went to #1.

The allure of the big vacuum is obvious, of course. Keep the player stuck on Terra Firma and you can't hurdle a certain imagination barrier—send 'em into Cosmos-villa and practically *anything* can happen, except, perhaps, a wonderful answer to the defrosting problem. And who cares, as long as there's insect-like aliens to smish?

Combine this with the high-tech appeal of outer space and you've got a born winner, and the current Mazuma in the name game. Hopefully, we'll be seeing far weirder (and pseudo-scientifically feasible) names like Worms Through Space in the near future...long as there's still a few commie-symp non-Earthlings threatening this man's Universe.

SECOND CORNER: THE HUGGABLES

Can't spell "cute" with the "you." Enter l'il darlings like Frogger, Ms. Pac-Man, and Beany Bopper. Not to forget Donkey Kong, Jr.—as if *Donkey*

photo by Larry Kaplan

Kong wasn't the all-time vid-name answer to the calico chicken pot-holder, they had to come up with *junior*, for God's sake. Well, it's a big arcade.

The extremely non-threatening overtones of The Huggable names might very well lead one to believe they're slanted at...uh...little kids. This is partially true, but one of the Ems told me that age appeal is dictated, primarily, by the degree of difficulty of the game. It only makes sense that the Ems would try to hook 'em right out of Pampers, but this doesn't explain the popularity of Huggables among gamesters of all ages and persuasions.

Since vidiots are a discerning lot, it would seem that the Name-it/Play-it Quotient breaks down when the action's agreeable, then. Don't start worrying until they come out with Puffy, where you try to unravel a two-week-old kitten from a dreaded "ball of string."

THIRD CORNER: OBVIOUS GIBBERISH

And my favorite resting place as well. Now, if you were simply handed a list of names, wouldn't Krull sound *mighty attractive?* Playing a game that isn't even a word!

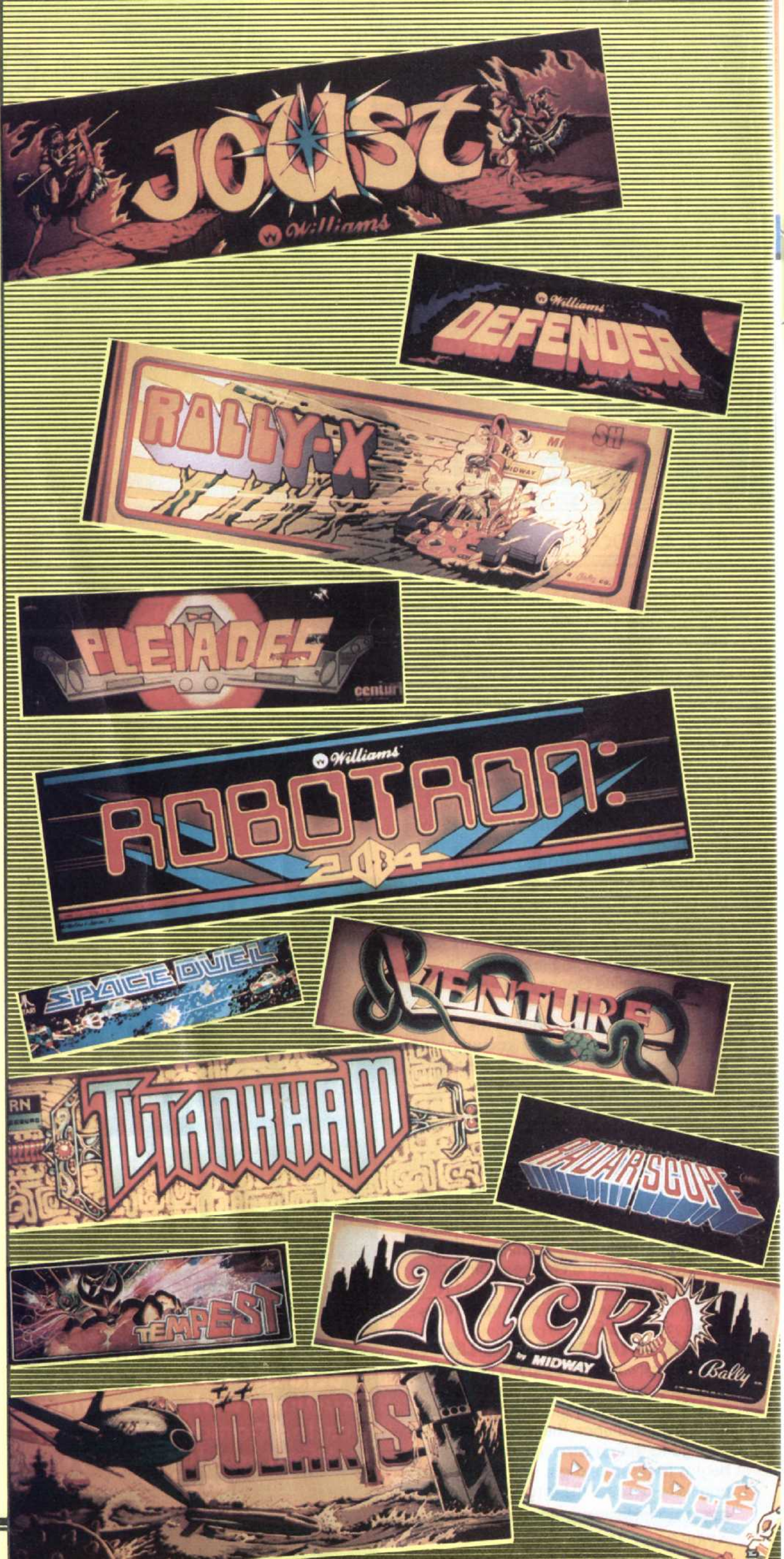
Gibberish tends to cross-over with other contenders, especially Space Cadet and Hi-Tech names. 'Frinstance, I rate Galaga as Gibberish and Zaxxon as Hi-Tech, but—then again—I've always been pretty arbitrary about this sort of thing. As befits syllables constructed from baby-talk sprees, gibberish names *know no rules*. Let alone language. When you stop and think about it, Tron must be as meaningless in Zimbabwaese as it is in English.

The key to a true gibberish name is (1) it either sounds like a grunt, or (2) it has a ludicrous excess of consonants. Hopefully, both. These names aren't spoken, they're sneezed. I like to think that their primal nature reflects the regresso mentality of a gamester at his bestial and intuitive best. What do you want, checkers or Kyphus?

FOURTH CORNER: CASH-INS

Although Cash-Ins are the demeaning parasites of the Name Game, they're probably at least as redeeming as the day-glo hula hoop, metaphorically speaking. I mean, even the Ems know you gotta make the game *a little* interesting. If you didn't, you couldn't even get a Baptist to consider playing Fishes And Loaves.

The Dave Clark Four Point Five of Cash-In names is, inevitably, E.T. This is the game where you try to help an outer-space croaker sit in on a Michael Jackson/Paul McCartney recording session before the much-feared "product" can be released! Or something like that. As you can see, the object of the game is of lesser consequence when it comes to Cash-Ins,



just as long as you've seen the watchimicallit, movie. Twelve, fifteen times.

Cash-Ins are also cross-overs. No breathing adult spends more than a tenth of a second per lifetime worrying about Smurfette, that's for sure...yet Colecovision's Smurf finds players among the shaving audience. Ditto for Raiders Of The Lost Arcade. Cash-Ins will obviously be with us for a long time, like forever, although the corner lost considerable credibility with Escape, based on the escapades of the alleged rock group Journey. Surely the game should've been called *Really* Boring.

FIFTH CORNER: HI-TECH

Or, as they say over at Astrocade, ZZZZZap! Hi-Tech names conjure up images of everything vidgames wish they were (i.e., interesting) by melding Space Cadet with Gibberish and spewing out stuff that would sound damned logical (i.e., Zaxxon) if you just happen to be born 80 years from now. As matters stand, sleek (yet essentially meaningless) names like Turbo satisfy the modern tech-lust. A minor corner, never destined for Mazumaship, I fear.

SIXTH CORNER: STRAIGHT DESCRIPTO

For down-to-earth players, we have this anti-Gibberish corner, featuring names like Joust, Defender, and—the reigning champeen of Modern Descripto—Atari's fishin'-is-my-mission Salmon Run.

Their appeal? Well (at last) we have a group of names that *actually describe* what in the hell the game's all about. Pretty weird, huh? Sort of like knowing whether or not a girl...uh, you know... before you even ask her for a date.

The way Descripto's get named, amazingly enough, is when "someone picks up an idea or a concept around a word or a theme," according to Williams, the eminent Em who pushes Joust. And here you thought they got these names from all-night Scrabble-a-thons. A good future Descripto would be Snooze, where the player who can successfully do absolutely nothing for the longest period of time, wins. Or better yet, doesn't have to play the game anymore.

THE SCORE

Space Cadets enjoy the lead in the Name Game, but don't write off Descripto or Gibberish yet, either. As more (and more and...) games hit the market, all the *really good* space names will be taken, leaving the Ems the obvious Straight Descripto route, which will never become extinct as long as there's a point to the game, or the equally obvious Gibberish route. To a large extent, the players themselves will determine the eventual outcome of the Name Game, and they certainly deserve nothing less. ■

Inside the NAME FACTORY

All these screwball names must be pretty hard to come up with, right? Of *course not!* Getting paid for gurgling seems to be one of the legitimate thrills around the old vid-game farm.

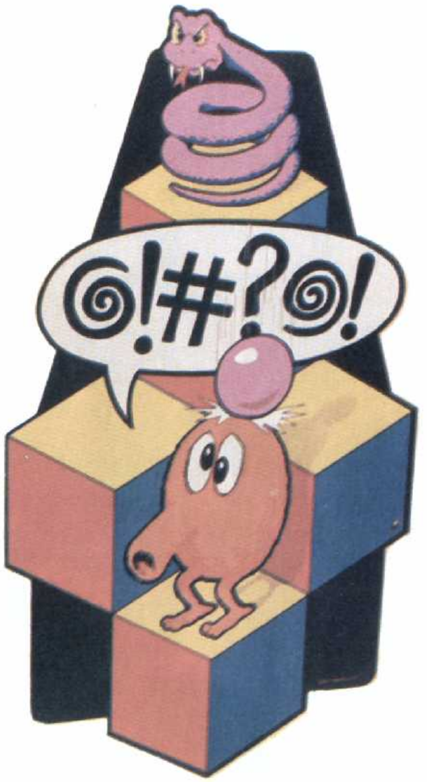
Jack Hubka of Gottlieb explains: "It's really pretty simple—we get about 30 people standing around and we bounce things off each other." Like what, nerf joysticks? Oh no, *names*. Gottlieb has one of the great gibberish names in Q*Bert, but Hubka is modest about the origins of the strange syllables. In fact he can hardly remember. "There was some discussion on how to spell it," he recalls. C'mon, Jack, isn't that "i-t?" Yuk, yuk. Well, in any case, more straightforward competition like Cubert was quashed.

Keith Egging over at Taito elaborates, stressing that names can come from anywhere, and usually do. "A lot of times the programmer will have the name (before he invents the game). We're presently doing one called Toasters And Chainsaws, and the game evolved from that name."

I should hope so. Gosh, it almost sounds like love and marriage, huh? Despite the fun, though, there is a moribund side to the Name Game.

"There's a lot of legal procedures involved," Egging says. "Once we have a name that seems to be conducive to the game, we have to do a patent and trademark search to see if there's other games that have the same name, or if it's been used on something else." Hmm, he must be talking about Toasters And Chainsaws Goat Chow. Searches of this type can take up to two years, so you can see the vid-makers take these things seriously.

Once a game's ready to start swallowing quarters, the manufacturers take a long last look at the name, just in case playing something called Frzzzp makes people feel like leaving their lunch on the screen. "We have a group of test arcades...and some of the questions that we ask people are: what does the name invoke? Does the name tell you anything? Does the name incite you to play? Should we change it to something else? What do



you suggest that new name should be? Could you read the logo? Did you understand the lettering? Things like that," Egging says. Whew. And I thought *I* was taking this thing too seriously. Understand the lettering??

Does all this consumer output amount to weighty influence on the final monicker? You betcha...according to Egging, at least half their names have been changed because of public response. One such name is Front Line, which—in its debut form—was called Big Combat. That was the literal translation from the Japanese, but the American Taito group felt it was "too aggressive." They changed it to Blitz, but the trademark search ixnayed that, which led 'em to Front Line. Heck, I like Big Combat myself.

(A similar translation fuddle led to the spectacularly-named Donkey Kong, as well. Nintendo, the manufacturers, marketed the beast in Japan as Krazy Kong. The Japanese word for "krazy"...I mean, "crazy" is "baka." However, the same idiogram in Japanese can also mean "horse" or "ass." How in the hell are these people wiping us out with such a screwy language, anyway?)

Well, do the Namers ever feel a little bit like lunatics dreaming this stuff up? "Oh, yeah. Definitely!" enthuses the redoubtable Mr. Egging. He tells the story of one such free spirit: "The man that developed Qix—that game, no matter what the *game* was, he was gonna call it Qix. He wanted to start a new word where 'u' doesn't follow 'q.' and that was his reasoning." And that's something I can't qik about. ■

"Ice Cream For Crow"—Captain Beefheart searches for that bothersome extension cord.

The Doobies Live on Showtime: Innocuous but ultimately Smurf-like.

ROCK VIDIOCY

WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

(You Can't Buy)

BY DAVE DiMARTINO

Back a few months ago, something unusual happened: Captain Beefheart was on TV.

That may not sound like much, but it was. Near as I can figure, it must've been only the third or fourth time Beefheart—aka Don Van Vliet—has ever had a television audience. While his largest audience came with his *Saturday Night Live* gig a few seasons back, back when he was "touring to promote" *Doc At The Radar Station*, his surprising appearance in late 1982—on *Late Night With David Letterman*— may have a lot more future bearing on the man's musical career.

While I looked forward to Van Vliet's *Letterman* appearance for a month, I found myself vaguely disappointed when it happened. Why? For starters, Brooke Shields' earlier appearance on the show screwed up the night's schedule; Beefheart didn't have near enough time. When he finally did emerge onstage, the banter between him and Letterman seemed more stilted than I would've liked—most of which I'd say was Letterman's fault. The man has difficulty conducting a straight interview without putting in a few puns or cracks intermittently to display his wit. (No doubt his attempts to be weird at all costs were indirectly responsible for Beefheart's booking in the first place, but that's getting off the track.) Since Van Vliet himself has an equally difficult time *giving* a straight interview, the end result was something of a jumble. Being familiar with Van Vliet from a few interviews I've done over the years and, of course, with Letterman from his *Late Night* show, I found myself uncomfortable because these two usually very funny men simply didn't seem to "get" each other, and I could only wonder what those members of the *Late Night* audience totally unfamiliar with Beefheart's long career were thinking throughout.

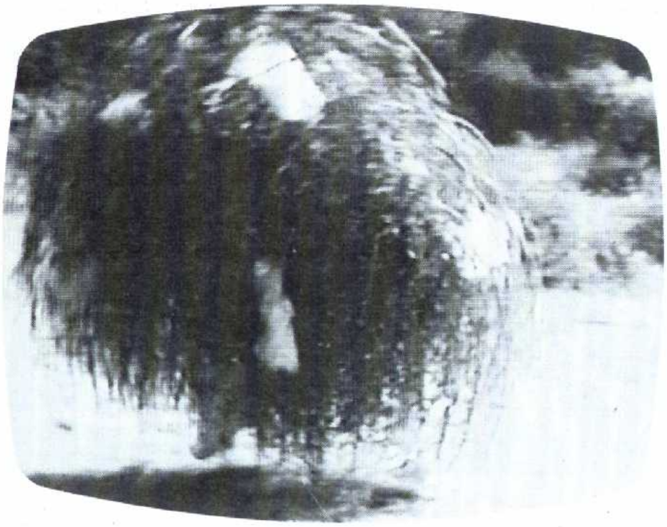
Don Van Vliet has rarely gone on the road to tour with his various Magic Bands. His last tour—the one that brought him to *SNL*—must've been a wearing one, as he decided he didn't want to go through it all again for his newest album, *Ice Cream For Crow*. Thus, for better or worse, the only avenues of promotion he's provided himself with are two—the *Letterman* appearance and his "Ice Cream For Crow" video.

The "Ice Cream For Crow" video is superb; not the best *ever* by a long shot—how could it be, done for "under $10,000" when there are bands like Duran Duran around whose video costs

screen photos by Larry Kaplan

Captain Beefheart—"Scarecrow, you answer."

The Doobie Brothers—Cornelius Bumpus, post-Moby Grape.



Sir Tumbleweed, "Ecology Officer" for "Ice Cream For Crow."

Aldo Nova—few suspect what was on his breath.

Vandenberg—what if Kim Fowley and David Lee Roth had a *baby?*

dwarf that sum?—but intelligent, colorful and vivid, all that rock video should ever be. Produced by Ken Shreiber and shot by Daniel Pearl, cinematographer of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, the video features Beefheart out in the Mojave, the trailer he and his wife Jan live in less than a mile away, exhorting, pointing at the camera, ominous close-ups, switches from color to B&W, the Magic Band flailing away on their respective axes as if we were witnessing a jungle dance in the desert. Words like "shaman" should pop up here next but won't; Van Vliet once told a friend of mine in Miami that he loved the fog—"it's so *mysterious*"—and that same artistic sensibility seems at work here.

The problem? MTV won't play it. "I *don't* want my MTV," Beefheart told Letterman, begrudged and justifiably so. The best vehicle for selling records America's *got* at this point (take a look at the charts: Men At Work, Stray Cats, Flock Of Seagulls—where were *they* a year ago?), and certainly the only major one available for the non-touring Beefheart to promote his new album, and it's denied him. Gary Lucas, Magic Band guitarist, told me MTV bigwigs thought "the music was too weird"—which it certainly *isn't*, especially for Beefheart, it sounds more like it came from ZZ Top's *Deguello* than *Trout Mask Replica*, believe me. Furthermore, Lucas says, "they thought Don looked too *old*," inexcusable from any standpoint considering that brash young punk upstarts like Pete Townshend, Mick Jagger and Grace Slick are in evidence hourly on MTV.

In all, says Lucas, the band is "incredibly disheartened," and who wouldn't be, in their place? *Doc At The Radar Station*, now out of print, sold 35,000 copies, most of which Lucas attributes to the accompanying tour the Magic Band underwent at the time. Currently, says he, *Ice Cream For Crow* sits at the 25,000 mark and has apparently reached a sales plateau. Not touring, of course, has held sales down; the video's non-appearance on MTV has probably held them down even more. Not that it's every band's God-given *right* to appear on MTV—but "Ice Cream For Crow" is clearly and entirely "appropriate" programming, and a damn sight better than the 80th rerun of Loverboy or Toto you better *believe it*.

My suggestion: write to MTV and ask for "Ice Cream For Crow." Here's the address:

MTV Comments
P.O. Box 1370
Radio City Station
New York, NY 10101

* * *

A brief word here about *The Doobie Brothers Farewell Concert*, which is just what you think it is, the last-ever Doobie Brothers performance, shot at Berkeley's Greek Theatre last September.

What this video plainly represents is the way things are going to *be* from now on, the way big pop bands will be calling it a day in this video-ready decade. Remember *Fillmore?* When they closed *that* place down, they made a movie of it—it still hits the midnight movie circuit double-billed with *Volunteer Jam*. Remember the Band's send-off, *The Last Waltz?* Van Morrison, Bob Dylan, Neil Young—hell, there were biggies all over the place on that one.

Well, there's no more Fillmore anymore and *Carny* came and went and I guess Van, Bob & Neil had prior engagements, so we're left with *Farewell Concert* by the Doobies and, all kidding aside, it's a respectable way for *any* band to end their career. Essentially the Doobs cover all their biggies from the beginning, climaxing with former DB Tom Johnston emerging and singing along with his former bandmates. Finally everyone who's ever *been* in the band (and hasn't died yet, I guess) walks onstage amid much hoopla and everybody goes home happy. It's a thoughtful career retrospective that even manages to include current solo stuff by Michael McDonald ("I Keep Forgetting," not to mention hit w/ Carly "You Belong To Me), plug Pat Simmons' about-to-begin solo career, and leave the band in the good graces of every viewer.

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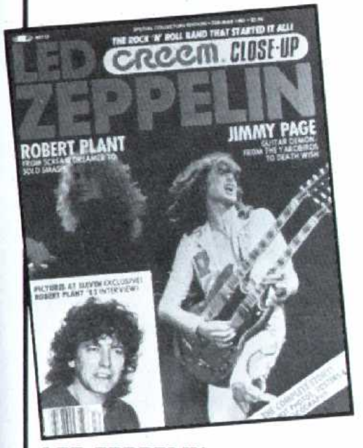
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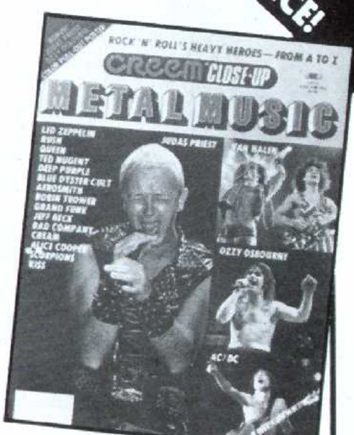
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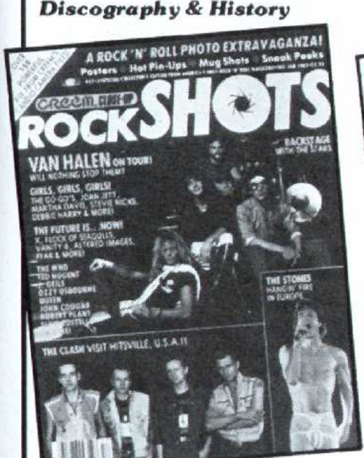
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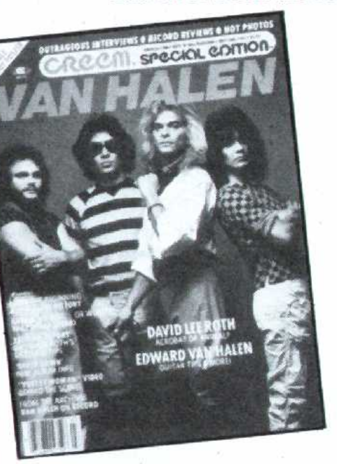
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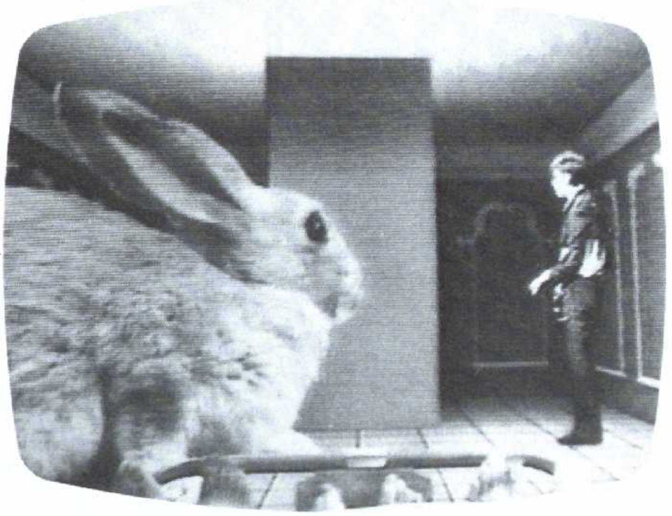

Thompson Twins—Hello there, sir, have you a *carrot?*

Adrian Belew—didn't they already do *Woodstock?*

Jerusalem—unwitting pawns of Satan?

The concert will be broadcast on the Showtime cable channel through early March and is likely to be repeated several times before going its way to videocassette and videodisc format. It's a Paramount Video production—the wave of the future in rockumentary—and the bucks stop there.

☆ ☆ ☆

Here's a brief rundown of some of the best and worst rock videos currently making the rounds. Data was obtained by watching a mind-boggling 10 hours of MTV, and brother, it weren't easy.

BEST

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART & THE MAGIC BAND: "Ice Cream For Crow"—OK, so maybe I *didn't* see this one on MTV. I should have.

ADRIAN BELEW: "Big Electric Cat"—This has been out for a while—I saw it in a club once—but I forgot how good it is. Essentially, there is *no innocuous storyline* at all, just a very colorful series of images that complement Belew's song superbly...the way these things are supposed to in the first place.

THOMPSON TWINS: "Lies"—An imaginative bit of Magritte-inspired surrealism, this Brit vid brings a lot more to the tube than the cover of *Beck-Ola*. A series of floating objects are viewed from an apparent hospital bed, again aiming at a less narrative/more psychedelic effect, here with great success. Miles ahead of most U.S. vids.

GOLDEN EARRING: "Twilight Zone"—Always a pleasure to make any reference whatsoever to these guys, which I'm basically doing because this illustrates the potential of rock videos to provide their own visual hooks. At the song's chorus of "When the bullet hits the bone," three guns shoot at the vid's protagonist and POW, down he falls, flat on his face. End result: when you hear the song, you visualize the guns. Great effect.

PRINCE: "1999"—Chosen because it's glib, full of sexual imagery and very colorful—and like the guy who sings it, it opens up the MTV/racism can-of-worms you've probably heard about already, so we'll discuss it later. In the meantime, good to see it in millions of American living rooms. In more ways than one.

WORST

ALDO NOVA: "Fantasy"—I know, it's been out for awhile, but lucky me hasn't seen it until now. All I can say is: Does this guy *really think* girls would want to throw themselves at him while he's onstage? And if he does, would he be kind enough to put a leopard-skin paper bag over his too-large face?

VANDENBURG: "Burning Heart"—They announced with glee that "this is a new one" when they showed it on MTV, but forgot to add "*for the trash bin*" when they said it. Not only do these Dutch fake-right-down-to-the-logo Van Halens stink—the lead singer can't even *sing* in English, let alone mouth this song's stupid lyrics. Stuff 'em with custard and roll 'em in powered sugar after you've deep-fried 'em, OK?

JERUSALEM: "Constantly Changing"—Another new video, this increasingly popular "Swedish Christian Rock Band," long a favorite of VIDIOT staffer Rick Johnson, signals an ominous trend in rock videos: psychedelia for Jesus! *I didn't mean it, Sister Simone!*

SAMMY HAGAR: "3 Lock Box"—If I ever witness another guitar smashing through a window pane, I will lose my lunch—by deliberately spraying it all over my record collection, which includes (need I add?) not a single Sammy Hagar album, for now and forever.

APRIL WINE: "You're My Girl"—More absurdity from PTWBFCE (Potentially The Worst Band From Canada Ever, dummy), I shall leave it to a recent guest at my house to describe this video: "This band stinks because the drummer is bald-headed and too old for the group." Won't you agree that, surely, she was being *too kind?* ■

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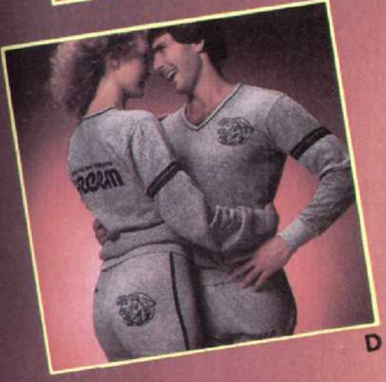

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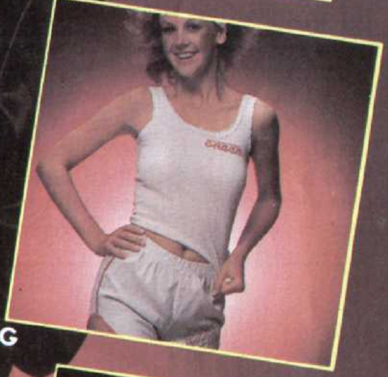

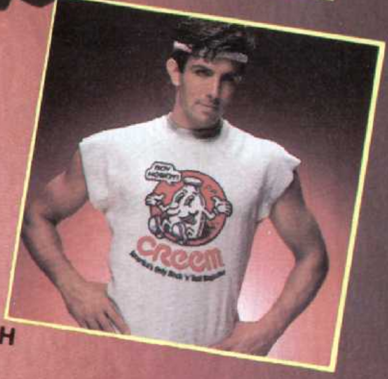

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CAPT. VIDIOT

Electronic Q & A

I've been reading the ads in the papers for the Atari, Intellivision, and ColecoVision video game machines, and frankly I'm confused! I know that none of the game carts for one system work with the other systems, but what I can't figure out is which system has the most games available. What do you think?

—Kenny Roberts, Avon, CN

•There are a couple of answers to your question. Most video stores will probably tell you that there are more games for the Atari 2600 machine than all the others put together. And they'd be right, except for the interesting fact that if you buy the ColecoVision system and also the Coleco Conversion Module #1 (about $55) you can play all the Coleco games plus all the Atari games (with the Conversion Module) on the Coleco machine. So at present the ColecoVision home game machine gives the player the greatest choice of games to play—since with the module you can play Atari, Activision, Imagic, Apollo, and M Network games as well as the Coleco game carts. By the way, Coleco plans to market other conversion modules, including one that will convert the ColecoVision game machine into a home computer.

I want to get my little brother one of those plastic spelling computers that are used by E.T. in the movie. Where can I buy one?

—Alice Tannen, Minneapolis, MN

•No problem. E.T. phoned home using a Texas Instruments Speak & Spell machine, which is one of a series of "talking learning aids" made by T.I. using their Solid State Speech technology. Beside the T.I. Speak & Spell (which says, displays, and helps to spell words as well as playing games) there are also Speak & Read, Speak & Math, and Touch & Tell. There are also extra modules available for Speak & Spell and other machines. The basic units are less than $75 (they are selling discount in New York for $52) and the extra modules are under $20 each.

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What's the difference between a 'mini' cassette and a regular cassette? I've seen some of these minicassettes on sale for use as music machines like the Walkman. I like them because they're really small and not expensive, but do they sound any good?

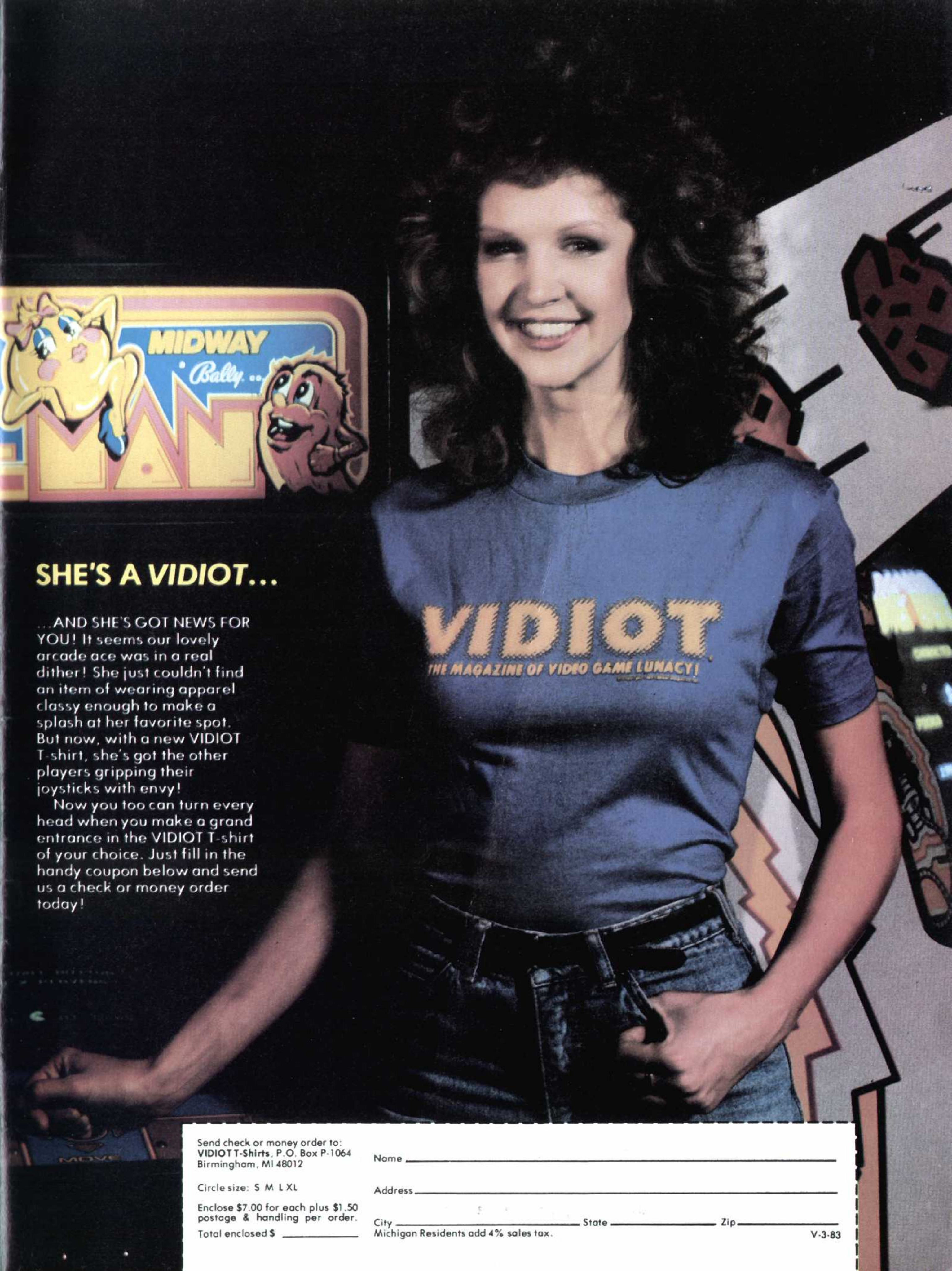
—Ted Marquis, North Hollywood, CA

•The mini-cassette was originally designed as an office dictating system and is currently sold by Sony, Panasonic, Pearlcorder (they call theirs a microcassette) and other companies. Since the real purpose of these tiny cassettes was to record voice, not music, they didn't initially provide the frequency response or fidelity of the large audio cassette. But all this is changing, and more and more minicassette Walkman-type machines will probably be introduced. Whether the sound quality will ever match the best of the best standard audio cassettes remains to be heard, but there are now long play minicassettes and metal tape minicassettes. The cost of these cassettes is about the same as their larger counterparts, and the cost of the minicassette machines is getting closer to the cost of the regular cassette machines. As yet, there aren't many minicassette systems available with stereo playback, but in some instances this may not necessarily be a drawback. If you want to experiment, I'd suggest one of the inexpensive Sony units (Sony calls their mini a "microcassette") such as the M-9, which is being sold at a discount for around $40. If you want to convert to the mini system completely, with all the advantages of the stereo record and play of the normal cassette system, check out the Sony WM-D6, which is a remarkable stereo mini system (but costs over $200), or the Panasonic RQ-WJ1 mini stereo player (which is about $75).

Is it possible to get one of those AM/FM Stereo radio tuners built-in to a cassette for my Walkman 2? My local electronics dealer says Sony doesn't make one.

—Pete O'Brien, Waltham, MA

•Your dealer is right. The design of the Sony Walkman machines makes it impobsible to use the cassette radio tuners with the machines. Once you put a cassette in a Walkman it is completely enclosed and you can't get at it, and these cassette tuners require that you place the cassette tuner in, but leave the lid of the cassette changer up so you can tune the radio to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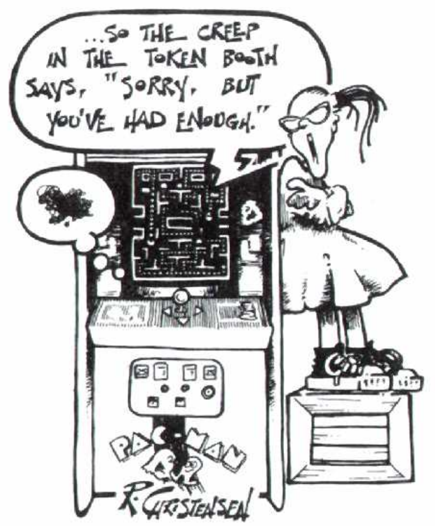
the station you want to hear. This isn't possible with the Walkman series. So you can either get a separate Walkman radio module such as the Sony SRF-30W or else switch over to another cassette player system such as those sold by Toshiba, which are designed to take an FM tuner pack.

My dad wants to buy a color video camera for our VHS. He seems to think that any color camera will work. I'm not so sure. What do you think?

—Tom Dubinsky, Chicago, IL

•Not all color cameras will work with all video machines, at least not as they come out of the box. Color video cameras require a power source to run them. If you have a portable video system, such as the Panasonic VHS PV-5200, then you just need a compatible color camera. If, however, you have a home unit VHS (which doesn't run on batteries and isn't designed as a portapak deck/camera system), you must go to a little more trouble to make sure that the color camera you get will work with the machine. Take the model number of your home VHS with you when you go to shop for color cameras, ask for a demonstration of the camera you want to buy working with a model VHS you have if you can, and make sure there are no extras involved. I know one fellow who bought a color camera for his home VHS and then found out he had to spend an extra $300 for a converter box to get the thing to work.


...SO THE CREEP IN THE TOKEN BOOTH SAYS, "SORRY, BUT YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH."
PAC-MAN
R. CHRISTENSEN

Is Sony making a TV set the same size as their Walkman cassette players? I've heard they are, but haven't seen them on sale.

—Janet Morrison, Ft. Worth, TX

•The Sony Watchman does exist, but you won't find it at your local electronics discount house quite yet. A few of them have reached this country, but so far they are only being sold at very high-priced, non-discount stores in a few major cities. When they'll be as easily available as the Walkman is difficult to say, but I wouldn't count on seeing them in the discount stores for six months to a year.

I recently purchased the Tron game cart for my Intellivision system. A friend of mine tells me that there is more than one Tron game cart sold. I haven't been able to find out any more. What do you know about it?

—Jeff Stewart, St. Petersburg, FL

•Altogether there are now three different Tron game carts from Intellivision. There are the Tron Deadly Disc and Tron Mazatron (#5391 and 5392 respectively) which play with the regular Intellivision system machine. There's also #5393—Tron Solar Sailor—which for full effect should be played with the Intellivoice voice synthesis module addition to the Intellivision system. Tron is the only game cart theme we know of that has been created in a number of game formats, which we think is an interesting move and should be noted by other game designers. I'm sure your local game cart store can order the games for you if they don't have them in stock.

I own a RCA VHS videocassette recorder (model #250), which I bought mainly to watch prerecorded movies on. How come when I try to watch them in the preview mode the screen is blank, but my own tapes are fine and the characters move at super-fast speed like they're supposed to?

—Michael Lipton, Millstone, WV

•Simple. Didn't you read the instructions? Almost all prerecorded VHS videocassettes made in the United States are recorded at the fastest tape speed to insure highest quality. Your machine has only two recording heads, while many top line video recorders, including RCA's, have *four*. For reasons of space, let's just say that your preview function therefore operates only at the two slowest tape speeds, but automatically cuts off the picture signal at the fastest. Which means you must be making your own tapes at one of the two lower speeds. You *can* override the picture-shut-off in your machine by diddling around inside it—but you'd be voiding your warranty by doing so, and risking considerable damage to your machine at the same time. ■

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In our debut issue, electronics expert Richard Robinson gives full details on the state of video game art! There's arcade action, celebrity vidiots, and *one step beyond!!*

VIDIOT II offers more on home games, the top ten arcade games, and a review of MTV. What more could you ask for?

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V-3-83

Nintendo
DONKEY KONG
JUNIOR
CONTROLLER

TANÉ CAIN IS A *VIDIOT!*

New singing sensation Tané looks like she may be a newcomer to vidiocy as well, concentrating here on Donkey Kong Junior as opposed to the Kong's mighty dad! We don't know what her favorite game is, but we'd bet that one of 'em is the new Journey Escape game, since she probably gets a big kick out of trying to keep those evil, electronic groupies away from hubby Jonathan Cain!

photo by Michael N. Marks

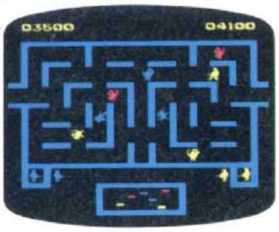
Are you up to the challenge of Wizard of Wor™ and Gorf™?

So you're hot stuff at video games? Joysticks melt in your hand? Don't let it go to your head. Try mastering Wizard of Wor and Gorf, the two Bally/Midway arcade hits you can now play at home. They're new from CBS Video Games.

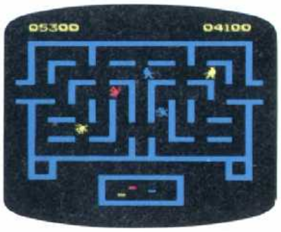
Both are made for the Atari® Video Computer System™ and Sears® Video Arcade.™

WIZARD OF WOR

Dare you enter the Wizard's diabolic dungeon where doom lurks at every turn? Can you keep your composure as the Wizard's henchmen try eating you... ALIVE? Fight back. Use your radar screen.



Vaporize the Burwors. Chase the Worluk.



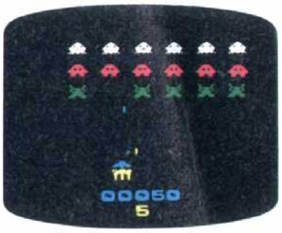
Until the Ultimate: The sometime-visible/sometime-invisible Wizard. Trust no one.

Wizard is designed so two may play at the same time. And since all's fair in Wor, even your best friend can zap you.

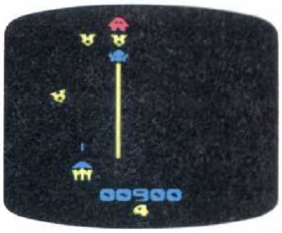
Now we don't want you to freak out totally, but if you're still up to the challenge, top the all-time, high score: 99,500 by Frank Merollo (10/82) and Buz Pryzby (8/82).

GORF

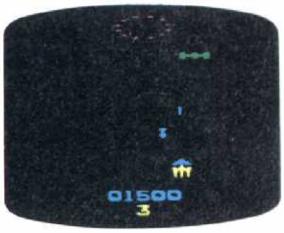
Can you hold up under the challenge of four different boards in one game? At nine different levels? Try and beat the high score of 32,700 by Horace Eckerstrom (9/82). No sweat? Well, what if we told you each level was faster than the last? Next time you'll think before you speak. But now you must face:



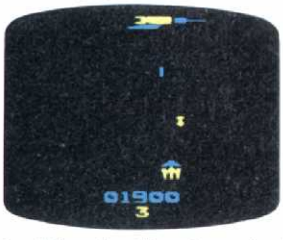
Gorfian bombs.



Kamikaze crazies & Laser Ships.



Deadly Subquark Torpedoes.



And finally: The dreaded Neutron Flagship.

Gorf's not easy. There's only ONE vulnerable spot on the Flagship. But don't let a little neutronium bomb stop you from hitting it.

GORF
WIZARD OF WOR
CBS Video Games
CBS Video Games

Now that you know what to expect, are you still up to the challenge of Wizard and Gorf?

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CBS Video Games

Are you up to the challenge?